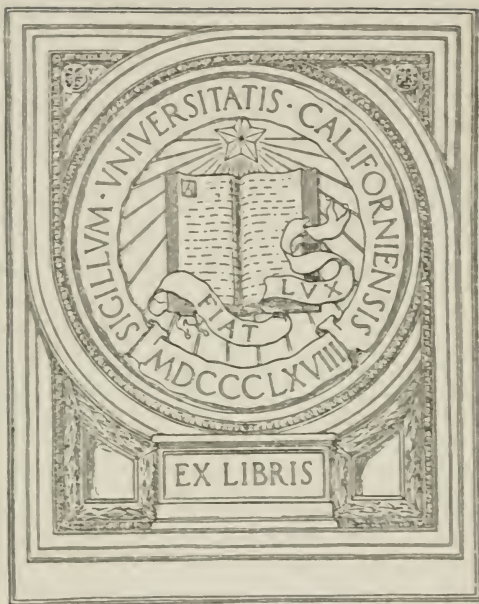


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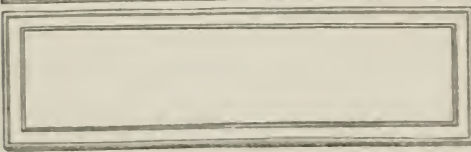
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Peg O' My Heart

BY

J. HARTLEY MANNERS

"Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream."

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PR 4974
M15 P4
1918
MAIN

To

“LAURIE”

“ — in that which no waters can quench,
No time forget, nor distance wear away.”

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

"Peg O' My Heart" was first produced in Los Angeles, California, on May 26th, 1912, with Laurette Taylor as "Peg", where it ran for 101 performances. Subsequently produced at the Cort Theater, New York City, on December 20th, 1912, with Laurette Taylor, it ran there until May 30th, 1914, making an unbroken run of 604 performances. Miss Taylor opened her London engagement on Saturday, October 10th, 1914, at the Comedy Theater, from which theater she later transferred the Comedy to the Globe Theater, and appeared in it there until October 18th, 1915. In all, the part of "Peg" was played by Miss Taylor in the United States and England for 1,099 performances.

The comedy has been performed in the United States and in Canada 5,987 times, eight companies at one time touring it during the season of 1914-1915; 1,001 times in London, during which run it was played at the Comedy, Globe, Apollo and St. James's Theaters; 2,475 times in the English provinces; 457 times in Australia and New Zealand; and 191 times in South Africa. In Australia it holds the record run of any comedy, having been played at the Palace Theater, Sydney, for fourteen consecutive weeks, totalling 112 performances.

It has also been played in India and the Far East, and in Holland, and arrangements have been made for its translation and adaptation into French, Italian and Spanish.

The total number of performances recorded to date in all parts of the world is 10,233.

April 15th, 1918.

The following is a copy of the programme of the first performance of "PEG O' MY HEART" at the Cort Theater, New York City.

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 20th, 1912.

LAURETTE TAYLOR

IN A COMEDY OF YOUTH IN THREE ACTS

ENTITLED

PEG O' MY HEART

By J. HARTLEY MANNERS

(Produced under the personal direction of the author)

"Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream".

CHARACTERS

(In the order of their first appearance)

MRS. CHICHESTER.....*Miss Emilie Melville*
FOOTMAN.....*Mr. Peter Bassett*
ETHEL, *Mrs. Chichester's daughter, Miss Christine Norman*
ALARIC, *Mrs. Chichester's son, Mr. Hassard Short*
CHRISTIAN BRENT.....*Mr. Reginald Mason*
PEG.....*Miss Laurette Taylor*
MONTGOMERY HAWKES, *solicitor, Mr. Clarence Handyside*
MAID.....*Miss Ruth Gartland*
JERRY.....*Mr. H. Reeves-Smith*

THE SCENES OF THE COMEDY

- ACT I. The Coming of Peg.
ACT II. The Rebellion of Peg.
ACT III. Peg O' My Heart.

The entire action of the comedy passes in the living-room of Regal Villa, Mrs. Chichester's house in Scarborough, England, in early summer.

One month elapses between Acts I and II, and a single night passes between Acts II and III.

NOTE: The curtain will descend in Act II to denote the passing of a few hours.

The following is a copy of the programme of the first performance of "PEG O' MY HEART" at the Comedy Theatre, London.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10th, 1914.

LAURETTE TAYLOR

IN A COMEDY OF YOUTH IN THREE ACTS

ENTITLED

PEG O' MY HEART

BY J. HARTLEY MANNERS

(Produced under the personal direction of the author)

"Oh, there's nothing half so sweet in life
As Love's young dream".

"JERRY".....*Mr. A. E. Matthews*
ALARIC CHICHESTER.....*Mr. Percy Ames*
MONTGOMERY HAWKES.....*Mr. J. H. Barnes*
CHRISTIAN BRENT.....*Mr. Eille Norwood*
JARVIS.....*Mr. Albert Sims*
MRS. CHICHESTER.....*Miss Helen Ferrers*
ETHEL CHICHESTER...*Miss Violet Kemble Cooper*
BENNETT*Miss Bettina Forest*
"PEG".....*Miss Laurette Taylor*

THE SCENES OF THE COMEDY

- Act I. The Coming of Peg.
Act II. The Rebellion of Peg.
Act III. Peg O' My Heart.

The entire action of the comedy passes at Regal Villa, Mrs. Chichester's house in Scarborough in early summer.

One month elapses between Acts I and II.

A single night passes between Acts II and III.

NOTE: The curtain will be lowered in Act II for one minutes to denote the lapse of a few hours.

LORD CHAMBERLAIN'S OFFICE,

St. James's Palace, S. W.
Sept. 21st, 1914.

Sir :

In reply to your letter of the 19th, instant. I am desired by the Lord Chamberlain to inform you that the play "Peg O' My Heart" was licensed to the Manager of the St. James's Theatre on June 5th, 1912.

Yours faithfully,
H. TRENDÉLL,
For Assistant Comptroller.

J. HARTLEY MANNERS, ESQ.

THE CHARACTERS IN THE COMEDY

MRS. CHICHESTER

ALARIC.....*Her son*

ETHEL.....*Her daughter*

MONTGOMERY HAWKES.....*Solicitor*

CHRISTIAN BRENT

FOOTMAN (JARVIS)

MAID (BENNETT)

" JERRY "

and

" PEG "

PEG O' MY HEART

ACT I

"THE COMING OF PEG"

SCENE: *The action of the entire comedy passes in a living-room in an old Tudor house in Scarborough, England. It is a solid, massive room on the ground level opening into a garden. Windows c. and r. Through the windows c. can be seen pathways winding away between lines of old, tall trees to the sea, and through the window r. can be seen an old garden with flowers in full bloom. Jasmine and creepers climb up the porch.*

The room is furnished for the most part with solid old furniture; an oak table c. on which are books, papers, magazines, methodically arranged; further down r. an arm-chair; down l. against wall a writing-desk; a grand piano r. on which is a mass of music, a marble statuette of Cupid, several framed photos, vases of flowers, etc. On the walls are some excellent pictures framed in oak. Lounges, comfortable arm-chairs, etc., are distributed about the room. The whole effect is of ease, comfort, and good taste.

A flight of twelve deep stairs runs up and off at the back l. A door l.

The curtain rises on an empty stage.

MRS. CHICHESTER, a woman of fifty, hurries in through alcove R. back.

JARVIS enters L. with letters on salver.

MRS. CHICHESTER comes down to table c., and JARVIS meets her. She takes letters and reads, then JARVIS goes up back, pulls open the curtains, and then goes down L. to door.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Wait, Jarvis. My son! Miss Ethel! At once, I must see them at once. (MRS. CHICHESTER finishes reading the letter, bursts into tears, sinks down shivering and crying on the arm-chair R. c.)

(ETHEL enters L. She has a copy of "The Morning Post" folded back at the General News Items. She goes across to her mother. FOOTMAN exit L.)

ETHEL. Mother! Have you seen this?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, my dear Ethel!

(Enter ALARIC R. U. E. ETHEL goes to R. of her mother.)

ALARIC. (Moves down c. briskly and energetically into c., throwing his hat into window-seat at back) Hallo, Mater! Hallo, Ethel!

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Between gasps) Alaric! My poor boy!

ALARIC. (c.) What's the matter? What's up?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Seated R. c.) We're— (Sob) We're— (Sob) ruined! (Cries bitterly)

ALARIC. (At R. c., by his mother) Ruined? Go on! Are we, really?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Looking at letter and staunching her tears) Our bank has failed. Every penny your poor father left me was in it. We're beggars.

ALARIC. Oh, tush! Tush and nonsense! It can't be true.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Hands him letter*) Read.

ALARIC. (*To ETHEL*) Eh!

ETHEL. (*Crossing to ALARIC, hands him "The Morning Post" with thumb on paragraph, and then sits on high chair R.*) Yes, look.

ALARIC. (*c., looks at paper and reads*) "Failure of Gifford's Bank". (*Looks at letter and reads*) "Gifford's Bank suspended business yesterday". (*Looks at newspaper*) "Gifford's Bank has closed its doors." Eh? (*Looks blankly at MRS. CHICHESTER and ETHEL*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Seated R. c.*) Yes. We're ruined.

ETHEL. Beggars!

ALARIC. (*c.*) Now that's what I call a downright, rotten, black-guardly shame. Closed its doors, indeed! Why should it close its doors? That's what I want to know. Why—should—it? What right have banks to fail? Why isn't there a law against it? (*Looking from letter and paper, at which he glances alternately*) They should be made to open their doors—and keep 'em open. That's what we give 'em our money for—so that we can take it out when we want to.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Everything gone! Ruined! And at my age!

ALARIC. (*Goes to table and puts down letter and paper*) A nice kettle of fish! That's all I can say. A nice kettle of fish, all a-boiling. Eh, Ethel?

ETHEL. (*Quite unmoved*) Pity!

(MRS. CHICHESTER *moans.*)

ALARIC. (*Crosses to MRS. CHICHESTER*) Don't worry, Mater. (*Buttons his coat determinedly*) I'll go down and tell 'em just what I think of 'em.

They can't play the fool with me. Don't you care, Mater. You've got a son, thank God. And one no bank can take liberties with. What we put in there we've got to have out. That's all I can say. We've simply—got—to—have—it—out. I've said it. (*Crosses into L. c.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. It's bankrupt!

ETHEL. Failed!

MRS. CHICHESTER. We're beggars. I must live on charity the rest of my life. The guest of relations I've always hated the sight of, and who've always hated me. Oh! (*Weeps*)

ALARIC. (*Crosses to R. c. to his mother, comforts her, and speaks to ETHEL*) Don't you think we'll get anything?

ETHEL. (*Shakes her head*) Nothing.

alaric ETHEL. (*Unbuttoning his coat, goes limp*) I always thought bank directors were a lot of blighters. Good Lord, what a mess!

(MRS. CHICHESTER *looks up at him.*)

ALARIC. What's to become of Ethel?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Looking up at ALARIC*) Whoever shelters me must take Ethel as well.

ALARIC. Shocking tough, old girl. (*Looking across at ETHEL*)

ETHEL. (*Shakes her head determinedly*) No.

ALARIC. No? What?

ETHEL. Charity.

ALARIC. (*Shivers*) Cold-blooded word. What will you do?

ETHEL. Work.

ALARIC. What at?

ETHEL. Teach.

ALARIC. (R. c.) Teach! Who in the wide world can you teach?

ETHEL. Children.

ALARIC. Oh, come! That's rich! Eh, Mater?

Ethel teachin' grubby little children their A. B. C's.
Tush!

ETHEL. Must.

ALARIC. A Chichester teach!

ETHEL. (*With imperative gesture*) Settled!
(*Rises up R. to piano*)

ALARIC. (*Determinedly buttoning up his coat again*) Very well then, I'll work too. (*Faces front*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, Alaric!

ALARIC. I'll put my hand to the plough. (*With increased energy*) The more I think of it the keener I am to begin. From to-day I'll be a workin' man.

ETHEL. (*By piano R., laughs mirthlessly and superciliously*) Ha!

ALARIC. (*Turning quickly to her*) And may I ask why that "Ha"? (*To MRS. CHICHESTER C.*) There is nothing I couldn't do if I was really put to it, not a single thing.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Proudly*) I know that, dear. But it's dreadful to think of you working.

ALARIC. Not at all. I'm just tingling all over at the thought of it. Only reason I haven't so far is because I never had to. But now that I have, I'll just buckle on my armor, so to speak, and astonish you all. (*Leans on table C.*)

ETHEL. (*R., above piano, laughs again*) Ha!

ALARIC. Please don't laugh in that cheerless way, Ethel. (*Shivers*) It goes all down my spine. Jerry's always telling me I ought to do something; that the world is for the worker, and all that. Now I'm goin' to show him. (*Suddenly*) I say, what's to-day? (*Looks at date of newspaper*) The first? June the first. Jerry's comin' to-day. All his family. They've taken "Noel's Folly" on the hill. He's sure to look in here. (*JARVIS enters L. with card on salver, and crosses L. C.*) Couldn't

be better. I'll put it to him as man to man. He's the cove to turn to in a case like this. I'll—What is it? (*To JARVIS, who holds out salver to him, picks up card and reads it*) Chris Brent!

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rising, goes to ETHEL*) Oh, I can't see anyone.

ALARIC. Nor I. I'm all strung up. (*To JARVIS*) Tell Mr. Brent we're out. (*Puts card back on salver*)

ETHEL. I'll see Mr. Brent here.

(*Exit JARVIS L.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Thank you, dear. My head's throbbing. I'll go to my room. (*Goes to stairs L. round back of table*)

ALARIC. (*Following MRS. CHICHESTER to stairs, passing up L., gets L. of her*) All right, Mater. And don't worry. Leave everything to me. I'll thrash the whole thing out—absolutely thrash it out.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*On stairs, to ETHEL*) Come to me when he goes, dear.

ETHEL. Yes, Mother.

(*MRS. CHICHESTER passes up the stairs out of sight.*)

ALARIC. (*Crossing to window up back, picks up hat*) Awful business, Ethel.

ETHEL. (*Has come to front of table*) Pretty bad.

ALARIC. Really goin' to teach? (*Down R. of table to R. C.*)

ETHEL. (C.) Yes.

ALARIC. Right. I'll find something, too. We'll pull through somehow—

ETHEL. (*Indicating door L.*) Mr. Brent's coming.

ALARIC. Jolly good of you to let him bore you. (*Going to alcove R.*) Hate the sight of the beggar myself. Always looks like the first conspirator at the play. (*The door L. opens. ALARIC hurries out through the alcove R. back*)

(JARVIS shows in CHRISTIAN BRENT, a dark, eager, pleasure-loving looking young man of twenty-five. ETHEL, for the first time, shows some animation as he enters and shakes her hand. JARVIS exit L.)

BRENT. Well, how are you? (*They shake hands*)

ETHEL. (c.) Fair. (*Draws her hand away, which he has kept*)

BRENT. (L. c.) Your mother?

ETHEL. Lying down.

BRENT. Alaric?

ETHEL. Out there.

BRENT. (*Glances quickly at the garden*) Then we've a moment or two alone?

ETHEL. I suppose so.

BRENT. Oh, Ethel. (*He goes to embrace her, she draws back and crosses to couch L. and sits. He follows her to L. c.*) Glad to see me?

ETHEL. Why not?

BRENT. (*He sits beside her, R. of her*) I am to see you—more than glad.

ETHEL. Why?

BRENT. I'm at the cross-roads.

ETHEL. Really?

BRENT. It came last night.

ETHEL. Oh!

BRENT. This is the end between me and my wife.

ETHEL. Is it?

BRENT. Yes. The end. It's been wretched. We've not one thought in common. There's not a

word of mine—not an action—that she doesn't misunderstand.

ETHEL. How boring!

BRENT. She'd see harm even in this.

ETHEL. Why?

BRENT. She'd think I was here to—to——

ETHEL. What?

BRENT. Make love to you.

ETHEL. Well. Aren't you?

BRENT. Ethel!

ETHEL. Don't you—always?

BRENT. How can you say that?

ETHEL. Don't you?

BRENT. (*On couch*) Has it *seemed* like that to you?

ETHEL. Yes—by insinuation. Never straightforwardly.

BRENT. Has it offended you?

ETHEL. Ah! Then you admit it?

BRENT. (*Moves a little nearer*) Oh, I wish I had the right to—(*Stops*)

ETHEL. Yes?

BRENT. Make love to you straightforwardly.

ETHEL. Then you wouldn't do it.

BRENT. Ethel!

ETHEL. It's only because you *haven't* the right that you do it—by suggestion.

BRENT. (*Starts back in disgust*) Why do you think that?

ETHEL. You don't deny it.

BRENT. What a contemptible opinion you must have of me. (*Rises, crosses up l. of table*)

ETHEL. Then we're quits, aren't we?

BRENT. (*l. c.*) How? (*Turns to her*)

ETHEL. You have a contemptible opinion of me.

BRENT. Why? (*Comes down a little*)

ETHEL. You must have. Every married man has

a contemptible opinion of the woman he covertly makes love to. If he hadn't he couldn't do it.

BRENT. (L. c.) I don't follow you.

ETHEL. Haven't you had time to think of an answer?

BRENT. I don't know what you're driving at.

ETHEL. (*Smiles*) No? I think you do. (BRENT makes movement away. *Pause*) What happened last night?

BRENT. Why, she—(*Moves towards her, then stops*) No. I'd sound like a cad, blaming a woman.

ETHEL. Never mind how it sounds, tell it.

BRENT. (*Comes to couch, knee on it, over her*) The more I look at you and listen to you the more I realize I should never have married.

ETHEL. Oh! Why did you?

BRENT. (*Sits beside her, back to the audience*) Why? Have you ever seen a young hare, fresh from its kind, run headlong into a snare? Have you ever seen a young man straight from college dash into a net? I did. I wasn't trap-wise. Good God, what nurslings we are when we first feel our feet! We're like children just loose from the leading-strings. Anything that glitters catches us. Every trap that is set for our unwary feet we drop into. I did. Dropped in. Caught hand and foot, mind and *soul*.

ETHEL. Soul?

BRENT. Yes.

ETHEL. Don't you mean body?

BRENT. Well, body, mind, *and* soul.

ETHEL. Ah! Body anyway.

BRENT. And for what? Love? Companionship! That's what we build on in marriage. And what did I realize? Hate and wrangling. Then came the baby.

ETHEL. Ah! (*She turns away*)

BRENT. One would think that would change

things. But, no. Neither of us wanted her—neither of us loved her. (*Look from ETHEL*) And then—(*Pause*) I shouldn't tell you this. It's horrible. I see it in your face. (*Pause*) What are you thinking?

ETHEL. I'm sorry.

BRENT. For me?

ETHEL. For your wife.

BRENT. My wife?

ETHEL. Yes. Aren't you? (*He turns away. Pause*) No? (*Pause*) Just sorry for yourself?

BRENT. You think me purely selfish?

ETHEL. Naturally. I am. (*Pause. BRENT turns away with a sulky movement*) Don't sulk. Let's be truthful—sometimes.

BRENT. (*Suddenly, facing her*) We quarrelled last night—about you.

ETHEL. Really?

BRENT. Gossip has linked us together. She heard it. Put the worst construction on it.

ETHEL. Well? What did you do?

BRENT. (*Rises and walks round table*) I left the house and walked the streets—hours. I looked my whole life back as if it were some stranger's. I tell you, we ought to be taught. We ought to be taught what marriage means. (*Comes down R.*) Just as we are taught not to steal or lie or sin. In marriage, when we are *ill-mated*, we do *all three*. We steal affection from someone else, we lie in our lives, we sin in our relationship. (*Turning R.*)

ETHEL. (*Rises and crosses to L. of table*) Do you mean that you're a sinner, a thief, and a liar?

BRENT. Ethel!

ETHEL. (*Sits L. of table*) Oh, take some of the blame. Don't put it all on the woman. (*He turns away*) What do you intend to do?

BRENT. (*Front of table*) Separate. The only thing. You don't doctor a poisoned limb when your

life is at stake. You cut it off. When *two lives* generate poison, face it as a surgeon would. Amputate.

ETHEL. And after the operation? What then?

BRENT. (*Leaning over front of table*) That is why I'm here—facing you.

ETHEL. But if *we* generate poison—what will you do? Amputate me?

BRENT. You are different from all other women.

ETHEL. Didn't you tell your wife that when you asked her to marry you?

BRENT. (*Turns away*) Don't say those things. They hurt. (*Going around R. of table*)

ETHEL. I'm afraid, Chris, I'm too frank. Aren't I?

BRENT. (*Leaning over, at back of table*) You stand alone. You seem to look into the hearts of people and know why and how they beat.

ETHEL. (*Meaningly*) Do I? It's an awkward faculty sometimes, isn't it?

BRENT. How marvellously different two women can *be*—you and my wife. (*Again back of table*)

ETHEL. We're not really very different. Only some natures like change. Yours does. And the new has all the virtues. I mightn't last as long as your wife did.

BRENT. (*Standing close to her, over her*) Don't say that. We have a common bond—understanding.

ETHEL. Think so?

BRENT. I understand you.

ETHEL. I wonder.

BRENT. You do me.

ETHEL. That's just it.

BRENT. I tell you I'm at the cross-roads. The finger-post points the way to me distinctly. (*Pause. Sits in chair back of table, close to her*) Would you risk it?

ETHEL. (*Turning on him*) What?

BRENT. I'll hide nothing. I'll put it all before you. The snubs of your friends, life in some little Continental village, dreading the passers-through, and then— No. It wouldn't be fair to you.

ETHEL. (*Slowly*) No. I don't think it would. However, I'll think it over and let you know.

BRENT. (*To* ETHEL, *eagerly*) When she sets me free we could—we could—(*Stops*)

ETHEL. It is a difficult little word at times, isn't it?

BRENT. *Would you marry me?*

ETHEL. I never cross my bridges till I reach them, and we're such a long way from that one, aren't we?

BRENT. (*Rises*) Ethel! (*She rises. He puts his hand on hers, and she moves away down L. C. in front of bench*) Then I'm to wait? (*Comes down level with her*)

ETHEL. Yes, do. When the time comes to accept the charity of relations or do something useful for tuppence a week, who knows? When a woman has to choose between charity and labor—who knows?

BRENT. Charity? Labor?

ETHEL. (*Moves to bench and sits*) A tiresome bank has failed with all our sixpences locked up in it. Isn't it stupid?

BRENT. (*Follows her to couch*) Is all your money gone?

ETHEL. Everything.

BRENT. Good God!

ETHEL. Mamma knows as little about business as she does about me. Until this morning she has always had a rooted belief in her bank and her daughter. If I bolt with you her last cherished illusion will be destroyed.

BRENT. (*R. of couch*) Let me help you.

ETHEL. How? Lend us money?

BRENT. I'll do that if—(*ETHEL looks at him*)
I beg your pardon.

ETHEL. (*Looking down*) So you see we're both, in a way, at the cross-roads.

BRENT. (*Seizing her hand*) Let me take you away out of it all.

ETHEL. (*Slowly*) No. Not just now. (*BRENT turns away to table c.*) I'm not in a bolting mood to-day. (*She turns to him saying*) Chris, some time, perhaps in the dead of night, something will snap in me—the slack, selfish, luxurious me that hates to be roused into action—and the longing for adventure will come. Then I'll send for you. (*Rises*)

BRENT. And you'll go with me?

ETHEL. (*Stretching lazily*) I suppose so. (*He goes to embrace her, but she keeps him off. Looking at him through half-closed eyes*) Then Heaven help you.

BRENT. I want you—I need you.

ETHEL. Until the time comes for amputation? (*He turns away*) You see I don't want you to have illusions about me. I've none about you. Let us begin fair, anyway. It will be much easier when the end comes. (*Moves away down L.*)

BRENT. (*Going quickly to her*) But there'll be no end. I love you—love you with every breath in my body, every thought in my mind, every throb of (*Embraces her*) my nerves.

(*Down the path c. comes a strange little figure—a beautiful girl of eighteen, shabbily but cleanly dressed in a simple print dress, a wide-brimmed cheap straw hat from under which hangs a profusion of short, natural curls of gleaming reddish hair. She is carrying a bag and a paper parcel somewhat the worse for wear under one arm, and under the other arm is a shaggy, unkempt, and altogether disgraceful looking Irish terrier. She walks quietly into the room, comes*

down R. C., sees BRENT and ETHEL in the embrace, turns away and sits in chair R. of table with her back to them.)

ETHEL. Please don't. It's so hot this morning. (*Sees PEG over BRENT'S R. shoulder, straightens up with a quick movement, and swings BRENT round. They look in horrified amazement at the strange little figure. ETHEL goes to her*) How long have you been here? (*Crosses to C. of table*)

PEG. (*R. of table, with a delightfully slight Irish brogue, looking up innocently in ETHEL'S eyes*) I just came in.

ETHEL. What do you want?

PEG. I don't want anything. I was told I must wait at this place.

ETHEL. Who told you?

PEG. A gentleman.

ETHEL. What gentleman?

PEG. Just a gentleman. He told me to wait—at the place that is written down on the card. (*Hands her a soiled visiting card. BRENT is L. staring at PEG*)

ETHEL. (*In front of table, taking card, reads*) "Mrs. Chichester, Regal Villa". What do you want with Mrs. Chichester?

PEG. I don't want anything. I was told I must wait here. (*Taking card back*)

ETHEL. Who are you?

PEG. I wasn't to say anything. I was only to wait.

(*ETHEL turns to BRENT. BRENT L. C. is looking admiringly at the little stranger.*)

ETHEL. (*Pauses and looks at BRENT then turns again to PEG*) You say you've only been here a minute?

PEG. Just a minute.

ETHEL. Were we talking when you came in?

PEG. Ye were.

ETHEL. Did you hear what we said?

PEG. Yes, I did. (*Look between* *ETHEL* *and* *BRENT*)

ETHEL. What did you *hear*?

PEG. I heard you say "Please don't. It's so hot this morning".

(*BRENT moves up L.*)

ETHEL. (*Pauses*) You refuse to say why you're here or who you are?

PEG. I don't refuse at all. The gentleman said to me, he said, "You go to the place that's written down on the card, and you sit down at the house, and you wait, and that's all you do—just wait".

ETHEL. (*Turning to BRENT*) Eh?

BRENT. Extraordinary.

ETHEL. (*Coming back to table*) The servants' quarters are at the back of the house.

PEG. Yes.

ETHEL. (*c. front of table*) And I may save you the trouble of waiting by telling you that we don't need any assistants. We're quite provided for.

PEG. Yes.

ETHEL. (*Pause*) If you insist on waiting, kindly do so there. (*Turns again to BRENT*)

PEG. Well, we're not particular where we wait as long as we wait. They're sending us to the kitchen, Michael. (*Rising up to opening R.*) At the back of the house, Miss?

ETHEL. Follow that path round until you come to a door. Knock, and ask permission to wait there. (*PEG gathers her bundles and her dog under her arms and goes to arch R. U. E. on to top of step*) For your future guidance, go to the back door of

a house and knock. Don't walk, unannounced, into a private room.

PEG. (*In arch*) Ye see, ma'am, I couldn't tell it was a private room. The blinds were all up and the door was open. I couldn't tell it was a private room.

ETHEL. That will do. That will do.

PEG. And I couldn't knock on your door because it's a windy. (*PEG exit arch R. U. E. and crosses to L.*)

ETHEL. (*After watching her off, moves down L., very angry*) Outrageous!

BRENT. (*Crossing up to window R. U. E.*) Poor little wretch. She's rather pretty.

ETHEL. (*Looking intelligently at him*) Is she?

BRENT. Didn't you think so?

ETHEL. (*Comes up to table c.*) I never notice the lower orders. You apparently do.

BRENT. (*Comes down R. level with her*) She's the strangest little apparition—

ETHEL. She's only a few yards away if you care to—(*Turns to BRENT*)

BRENT. Ethel! (*Comes down nearer to her*)

ETHEL. (*c.*) Suppose my mother had come in! Or Alaric! Never do such a thing again.

BRENT. I was carried away. I—

ETHEL. Kindly exercise a little more restraint. You'd better go now. (*Crosses to stairs up L.*)

BRENT. (*Following her to stairs round back of table*) May I come to-morrow?

ETHEL. No. Not to-morrow.

BRENT. Then the following day?

ETHEL. Perhaps.

BRENT. Ethel, remember I build on you.

ETHEL. (*Looking at him*) I suppose we are worthy of each other.

(*Voices off R.*)

ALARIC. (*Off*) Come this way, Mr. Hawkes. I think we shall find some of the family in here.

ETHEL. (*To BRENT*) Go now. (*Goes upstairs*)

(*As BRENT goes to door L. ALARIC hurries in through window R. U. E., sees ETHEL, puts hat on piano.*)

ALARIC. Wait a minute, Ethel. (*Seeing BRENT*) Hello, Brent! How are you? Disturbin' you?

BRENT. No. I'm just going.

ALARIC. Oh, don't go. I want to ask you something. (*He goes up to arch and calls to someone in the garden*) Come in, Mr. Hawkes. (*Crosses to c. Enter MONTGOMERY HAWKES, a suave, polished, important-looking man of forty. ALARIC comes back, introducing*) Mr. Hawkes—my sister—Mr. Brent. (*HAWKES bows to ETHEL and to BRENT and puts hat on table c. ALARIC to ETHEL*) You might see if the Mater's well enough to come down, like a dear, will ye? This gentleman's come all the way from London just to see her. D'ye mind? Bring her down here, will you? (*ETHEL goes upstairs and out of sight. To HAWKES*) Sit down, Mr. Hawkes. (*HAWKES sits in armchair R. ALARIC goes down L. to BRENT*) Must ye go? (*ALARIC L., shaking him warmly by the hand and taking him to door L.*) Sorry I was out. Run in any time. Always delighted to see you. Oh, I know what it was I wanted to ask you—Angel wife all right?

BRENT. Thank you.

ALARIC. And the darling child?

BRENT. Please give my remembrances to your mother.

ALARIC. Certainly. Look in any time. Any time at all. (*Exit BRENT L., ALARIC closes door. MRS. CHICHESTER and ETHEL, carrying dog, a little French*

foodle, come down the stairs L. HAWKES rises. MRS. CHICHESTER to L. c., ETHEL to bench, sits L. ALARIC goes up and brings MRS. CHICHESTER down. R. of her, and looking up at her as she comes down-stairs) Here we are, Mater. I found this gentleman in a rose-bed enquiring for our lodge. He's come all the way from dear old London just to see you. (*Brings MRS. CHICHESTER down L. c., bringing them together and introducing them.* ALARIC is c.) Mr. Hawkes—my mother.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (L. c. *anxiously*) You've come to see me?

HAWKES. On a very important and very private family matter.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Important? Private?

ALARIC. We're the family, Mr. Hawkes.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Her eyes filling*) Is it bad news?

HAWKES. (*Genially*) Oh, no.

ALARIC. Is it good news?

HAWKES. (*Up R. of table*) In a measure.

ALARIC. (*Helps MRS. CHICHESTER to couch*) Ah, then let's get at it. We can do with a bit of good news, can't we, Mater? Wait. Is it by any chance about the bank? (*Crosses to L. of table*)

HAWKES. (*To MRS. CHICHESTER*) It's about your late brother, Nathaniel.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Late? Is Nathaniel dead?

(ALARIC L. of table.)

HAWKES. (*Pauses R. of table. Nods commiseratingly*) Ten days ago. I am one of the executors of the late gentleman's estate. (*Sits R. of table c., and gets out his papers*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Weeps*) Oh!

ALARIC. Poor old Nat! Eh, Ethel?

ETHEL. (L. end of couch) Never saw him.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I ought to have been informed. The funeral——

HAWKES. (*Seated R. of table*) There was no funeral.

ALARIC. No funeral?

HAWKES. In obedience to his written wishes he was cremated, and no one was present except his chief executor and myself. He said *he* so little regretted not having seen any of his relations for the last twenty years that he was sure *they* would equally little regret his death. On no account was anyone to wear mourning for him, nor to express any open sorrow. They wouldn't feel it, so why lie about it?

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

ALARIC. Eh?

HAWKES. I use his own words.

ALARIC. (*L. of table*) What a rum old bird! Eh, Mater?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*R. end of couch*) He was always the most unfeeling, the most heartless——

HAWKES. Now, in his will——

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Checking herself*) Eh?

ALARIC. A will! Did the dear old gentleman leave a will?

(*ETHEL watches them smilingly and listens intently.*)

HAWKES. I have come here to make you acquainted with some of its contents.

ALARIC. (*Rubbing his hands gleefully*) Dear old Nat. I remember him when I was a baby. A portly, sandy-haired old buck, with three jolly chins.

HAWKES. (*Gravely*) He was white towards the end, and very thin.

ALARIC. (*L. of table*) Was he? It just shows, doesn't it? How much did he leave? (*Goes back of table*)

HAWKES. His estate is valued approximately at two hundred thousand pounds.

ALARIC. (*Whistles*) Phew! (*Sits back of table c.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Cries silently*) Perhaps it was my fault I didn't see him oftener——

ALARIC. How did he split it up?

HAWKES. To his immediate relations he left——

ALARIC. Yes?

(*MRS. CHICHESTER looks up through her tears, and ETHEL shows a little interest.*)

HAWKES. I regret to say—nothing.

ALARIC. What?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Nothing?

(*ETHEL turns away.*)

ALARIC. Not a penny piece to anyone?

HAWKES. No.

MRS. CHICHESTER. His own flesh and blood!

ALARIC. (*Back of table*) What a shabby old beggar!

MRS. CHICHESTER. He was always the most selfish, the most heartless——

HAWKES. (*Turning back the pages of the will and reading*) Here it is from the will. "I am not going to leave one penny of what I have spent my life accumulating to people who are already well provided for."

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rises and crosses to L. c. front of table*) But we're not well provided for.

ALARIC. (*Rises*) No. Our bank's bust.

MRS. CHICHESTER. We're ruined.

ALARIC. Broke.

MRS. CHICHESTER. We've nothing. (*ALARIC hands letter from table to MRS. CHICHESTER, who hands it to HAWKES*)

ALARIC. Not threppence.

HAWKES. (*Back of table*) Dear! Dear! How extremely distressing!

ALARIC. (*Back of table*) Distressin'! Disgustin'!

HAWKES. (*Hands letter back to ALARIC, who gives it to his mother*) Then perhaps a clause in his will may have a certain interest.

ALARIC. (*Helps MRS. CHICHESTER to chair L. of table, then sits again. All express interest*) Clause! Did the dear old gentleman leave a clause?

HAWKES. When Mr. Kingsnorth realized that he hadn't very much longer to live he spoke constantly of his other sister, Angela.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Seated L. of table*) But she's dead.

HAWKES. (*Looking up*) That was why he spoke of her.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Never a word of me?

HAWKES. We'll come to that later. (*Refers to papers*) It appears that this sister, Angela, married at the age of eighteen a certain improvident Irishman by the name of O'Connell, was cut off by her family——

MRS. CHICHESTER. The man was a beggar! It was a disgrace!

ALARIC. (*Checking her*) Mater!

HAWKES. (*Continuing to read*)——went to the United States of America with her husband, where a daughter was born. After going through many conditions of misery with her husband, who never seemed to prosper, she died while her child was still a baby. Mr. Kingsnorth elsewhere expresses his lasting regret that in one of his sister's acute stages of distress she wrote to him, asking him for the first time to assist her. He replied (*Looking up*) "You've made your bed—lie in it".

MRS. CHICHESTER. She had disgraced the family. He was quite right.

ALARIC. (*Checks her*) Mater! Mater! He hasn't got the old gentleman's clause out yet. Go on, Mr. Hawkes.

HAWKES. With death approaching, Mr. Kingsnorth's conscience began to trouble him, and the remembrance of his treatment of his unfortunate sister distressed him. If the child were still alive he wanted to see her. So I made enquiries and found that the girl was living with her father in very poor circumstances in the city of New York.

ALARIC. New York, eh? Fancy that, Ethel! New York!

HAWKES. We sent sufficient funds for the journey and a request to the father to allow her to visit Mr. Kingsnorth in England. The father consented. However, before she sailed, Mr. Kingsnorth died.

ALARIC. (*Seated back of table*) Died! Too bad! That really was too bad, Ethel. Eh? Died! (*To* ETHEL *and* MRS. CHICHESTER)

HAWKES. Realizing that he would never see her he made the most extraordinary provision for her in his will.

MRS. CHICHESTER. He provided for her, and not—for—me?

(ALARIC *checks her and kisses her hand.*)

HAWKES. Here is the provision. (*Reads*) "I hereby direct that to any respectable, well-connected women of breeding and family who will undertake the education and up-bringing of my niece, Margaret O'Connell, in accordance with the dignity and tradition of the Kingsnorths there be paid the sum of one thousand pounds a year——"

ALARIC. A thousand pounds a year! Fancy that, Ethel! A thousand pounds!

HAWKES. (*Reading*) "If at the expiration of one year my niece is found to be, in the judgment of my executors, unworthy of further interest she is to be returned to her father and the sum of two hundred and fifty pounds a year paid her to provide her with the necessities of life. But if, on the other hand, she proves herself worthy of the best traditions of the Kingsnorth family the course of training is to be continued until she reaches the age of twenty-one, when I hereby bequeath to her the sum of five thousand pounds a year——"

ALARIC. Five thousands pounds a year! I mean to say—five thousand pounds.

HAWKES. "—to be paid her annually out of my estate during her lifetime, and to be continued after her death to any male issue she may have——"

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Looks up*) Eh?

HAWKES. —by marriage.

MRS. CHICHESTER. And me—his own sister——

ALARIC. And I—who knew him as a baby——

HAWKES. "On no account is her father to be permitted to visit her, and she must not on any account visit her father. After the age of twenty-one she can do as she pleases". (*Looking up*)

ALARIC. That clause doesn't interest *us* at all, Mr. Hawkes.

HAWKES. Now my dear Mrs. Chichester, it was Mr. Kingsnorth's wish that the first person to be approached on the matter of undertaking the training of the young lady should be you.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rising*) I?

ALARIC. (*Rising*) My mother?

(*ETHEL rises also, and listens and watches intently.*)

HAWKES. (*Referring to will*) He said he would

be "sure at least of a strict upbringing in the best traditions of the Kingsnorths, and though narrow and conventional in ideas"—

MRS. CHICHESTER. Well! Really!

HAWKES. Again I use his own words. —"still, his sister Monica was eminently fitted to undertake such a charge". There you have the whole object of my visit. (*Rises*) Now will you undertake the training of the young lady?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crosses to couch*) I never heard of such a thing.

ETHEL. Ridiculous!

ALARIC. (*Coming down L. c.*) Tush! Tush and nonsense!

HAWKES. Then I take it you refuse?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*R. end of couch*) Absolutely.

ETHEL. Entirely.

ALARIC. (*L. c.*) I should say so.

HAWKES. Then there's nothing more to be said. Mr. Kingsnorth was of the opinion that you were well provided for, and that the additional thousand a year might be welcome as, say, pin-money for your daughter. (*Gathering up papers at table. ETHEL and Mrs. CHICHESTER look at each other. They draw a little away to front of bench*)

ETHEL. (*With a note of biting sarcasm*) Pin-money! Ha!

ALARIC. (*Coming down level with Mrs. CHICHESTER*) Mater! Ethel! A cool thousand, eh?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Pause*) It would keep things together.

ALARIC. The wolf from the door.

ETHEL. No charity.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To ALARIC*) What do you think?

ALARIC. Whatever you say, Mater.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To ETHEL*) Ethel?

ETHEL. You decide, Mamma.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To ALARIC*) We might try it for a while, at least.

ALARIC. Until we can look round.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Something may be saved from the wreck.

ALARIC. Until I get really started.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To ETHEL*) Ethel?

ETHEL. Whatever you decide, Mamma.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I'll do it. (*ALARIC turns up-stage a little*) It will be hard, but I'll do it. (*Crosses into c. All turn round to HAWKES. ETHEL sits on couch*)

HAWKES. (*R. c. smiling*) Well?

MRS. CHICHESTER. For the sake of my poor dead sister I'll do as Nathaniel wished.

HAWKES. Good! I'm delighted. (*Comes down R. a little. MRS. CHICHESTER turns to ALARIC*) One thing more. (*MRS. CHICHESTER turns to HAWKES again*) The young lady is not to be told of the conditions of the will unless at the discretion of the executors, should some crisis arise. She will be, to all intents and purposes, your guest.

ALARIC. Our guest? Fancy that, Ethel!

HAWKES. In that way we'll arrive at a more exact idea of her character. Is that understood?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Very well.

HAWKES. Where is your bell?

ALARIC. There. (*Points to bell up R. and moves to foot of stairs*)

HAWKES. (*Going up R.*) May I ring?

ALARIC. (*Going up L. a little*) Certainly. Want a sandwich or something?

HAWKES. I would like to send for the young lady. (*Smiling, he rings*) The heiress.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crossing to armchair R.*) Where is she?

HAWKES. She arrived from New York this morn-

ing and I brought her straight here. I had to call on a client, so I gave her your address and told her to come here and wait. (ETHEL rises) She ought to be here by now. (Comes down above table. JARVIS enters L.) Is there a young lady waiting for Mr. Hawkes?

JARVIS. Young lady, sir? No, sir. (Crosses L. c.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. That will do.

(JARVIS moves towards door L.)

HAWKES. That's strange.

ALARIC. There you are, you see.

JARVIS. (Comes back to L. c.) Oh, there is a young person sitting in the kitchen. Won't give no account of herself. Says she's to wait until a gentleman calls. Can't get nothing out of her.

HAWKES. That must be the young lady. May I bring her in?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Indignantly) My niece in the kitchen! Surely you should know the difference between my niece and a servant!

JARVIS. (At L. c.) I'm truly sorry, Madam, but there was nothing to tell—

MRS. CHICHESTER. (R. front of armchair) That will do. Bring my niece here at once. (Exit JARVIS L.) It's monstrous! (Comes to c. front of table)

ALARIC. (Crosses to R., R. of his mother) Stupid! That's what I call it—Stupid!

(ETHEL smiles.)

HAWKES. (Coming round L. of table into L. c.) Perhaps it was my fault. I told her not to talk—to come here and say she was to wait.

MRS. CHICHESTER. She should have been brought

straight to me. The poor thing! My niece in the kitchen! (*Goes back to armchair R.*) A Kingsnorth mistaken for a servant!

(*The door opens and the astonished JARVIS enters and beckons someone in. Then he looks helplessly at MRS. CHICHESTER to indicate that anyone might have made the same mistake. Enter the stranger, quite composedly, still holding her parcels and the dog. She comes to L. C. MRS. CHICHESTER, ALARIC, and ETHEL, look at her—MRS. CHICHESTER and ALARIC in horrified amazement, ETHEL with knit brows. JARVIS looks at them all, as much as to say "What did I tell you? No one could guess." JARVIS exit L.*)

PEG. (*Alluding to ETHEL's dog*) Where's the rest of that? (*Or*) It's a dog, isn't it?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Sinks in chair R. C.*) Oh! Oh! (*Pause*)

ALARIC. (*By high chair R., stares at the stranger in astonishment and turns to MRS. CHICHESTER. Aside*) Oh, I say! Really, you know! It isn't true. It can't be.

HAWKES. (*Crossing to meet PEG L. C.*) Come here. We're all your friends. (*Passes her across him to C. The stranger comes slowly to C., looking from one to the other. She bobs a little curtsey to MRS. CHICHESTER*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Pause. Controls herself with an effort. Half-hysterically*) What is your name?

PEG. Peg.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

PEG. (*Bobbing a little curtsey*) Peg. Peg O'Connell, my name is, ma'am.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Good heavens! (*To ALARIC*) Ring, Alaric.

ALARIC. (*Whispering to his mother*) It can't be, really. (*Goes up to bell at back and rings. PEG follows him round, then laughs to MR. HAWKES*)

HAWKES. (*Pause. To PEG*) This lady is Mrs. Chichester.

PEG. (R. C.) Chich—Chich—ster.

(*ALARIC up-stage by window*)

HAWKES. (C., *distinctly*) Chi—chest—er. Your aunt.

PEG. Where's my uncle?

HAWKES. Alas, my dear child, your uncle is dead.

PEG. Dead? After sending for me?

HAWKES. He died just before you sailed.

PEG. God rest his soul. I'm too late then. Good-day to yez. (*Bobs and starts for door L.*)

HAWKES. (C., *intercepting her*) Where are you going?

PEG. (C.) Back to my father.

HAWKES. (L. C.) Oh, dear, no.

PEG. I must go back to my father if my uncle's dead. I must go back to my father. If my uncle's dead I must go back to my father.

HAWKES. It was your uncle's last wish that you should stay here under your aunt's care. She has kindly consented to give you a home.

PEG. (*To MRS. CHICHESTER*) Have ye?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Faintly and angrily*) I have.

(*ALARIC moves down L., sits by ETHEL.*)

PEG. Thank ye, ma'am, but I think I'd be just as happy with my father.

HAWKES. Nonsense. You'll be very happy here.

(JARVIS enters L.)

PEG. (*Looking from one to the other*) They don't seem crazy about us, do they?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Jarvis, take away those parcels and that dog.

(JARVIS comes into L. C.)

PEG. (*Clutching the dog*) Oh, no, ma'am. Not Michael. Ye can't take Michael away from me. He was given to me by my father.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Take it away. And never let it inside the house again.

PEG. (*With anger and pathos*) Well, if ye don't want Michael inside the house ye don't want me inside your house.

HAWKES. (*Interposing*) Come, come——

PEG. No. I'm not going to let go my dog. I had a hard time getting him ashore. You don't understand about Michael. He's a house-dog, not a watch-dog. A pet dog, Michael is.

HAWKES. Come, now. Don't let us have an argument.

PEG. I'm not having an argument. I'm making a statement. I don't know these people ten minutes, and they want to take my dog away from me. (*Pointing to ETHEL*) She has a dog right in the house. (*HAWKES looks at ETHEL'S dog. PEG, under her breath*) And well ye may look. I thought it was her knitting until it moved.

HAWKES. You must try to do whatever your aunt asks you. Come, now—you can see him whenever you want to.

PEG. Is he going to be in the house?

HAWKES. Yes.

PEG. If I ring the bell he'll bring him in?
(*Pointing to JARVIS*)

HAWKES. To be sure he will.

PEG. Well, I don't suppose my father would like me to start a fight first thing. (*Gives dog to HAWKES*) But I don't understand why I can't have my dog. (*HAWKES gives dog to JARVIS, then takes the bag from her and hands it to JARVIS, who receives them in disgusted amazement. The parcel breaks open, and a prayer-book, a small bible, a rosary, and a little dull-framed photograph fall out. HAWKES around back of table to L. PEG kneels, picks up the articles and hands them to HAWKES, who puts them on top of bag JARVIS is holding. PEG retains photo and rosary, caresses MICHAEL, and says appealingly to JARVIS. Crossing to JARVIS*) Ye'll be very nice to him, won't ye? And if ye'll give him some water and a bone I'd be much obliged. He loves mutton-bones. Ye'll find he's crazy about mutton-bones. (*The astonished JARVIS goes out holding the dog and the parcels as far from him as possible*) That was a grand turn he made, wasn't it? (*To ALARIC, sitting on couch*) I hope he gives him a mutton-bone. Michael's crazy about mutton, so he is.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Sternly*) Come here. (*PEG backs to her, facing ALARIC*) Look at me.

(*PEG turns to her.*)

PEG. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Don't call me ma'am.

PEG. No, ma'am. (*Checks herself*) Ant, I mean. No, ant, I mean.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Aunt—not "ant".

ALARIC. (*L. of couch, to ETHEL*) "Ant"—like some little crawling insect.

PEG. (*Hears it, looks at ALARIC and ETHEL, then all round the room as if she missed someone.*

then turns back to MRS. CHICHESTER) Are you my uncle Nat's widow?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Indignantly*) I am not.

PEG. Then how are you my ant—aurnt?

MRS. CHICHESTER. I am your mother's sister.

PEG. (R. c.) Then yer name's Monica?

MRS. CHICHESTER. It is.

PEG. What do you think of that, now? (*Looks covertly at the photo*) You don't look a bit like my poor mother did.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What's that?

PEG. (*Softly*) It's my poor mother's picture, that is.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Let me see it. (*PEG hands it to her*) She had changed very much since I saw her.

PEG. Sorrow and poverty did that, Aunt Monica.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Aunt will be sufficient. Put it away. (*PEG covers it with her hands*) Do sit down.

PEG. All right. Where'll I sit? (*She looks at ALARIC, who does not move. HAWKES hands her chair L. of table. PEG sits*) Thank ye. (*MRS. CHICHESTER sighs*) Don't ye feel well? I don't. I don't like the steamer. The steamer always upsets me, the steamer does. (*She looks round and laughs at ALARIC, who is smoking a cigarette in a long holder*) Does that make you think it's a pipe? Sure, I'd no idea in the world I had such fine relations. Though my father always told me I had some very nice folks on my mother's side.

(HAWKES back of table c.)

ALARIC. (*On couch L.*) Folks! Really, Ethel! (*Holds his knee in his hands, lifting his leg*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Severely, to PEG*) Don't

sprawl like that. Sit up. (PEG *does so*) Put your feet together. (PEG *puts one leg over the other*) No, no. Look at your cousin.

PEG. (*Uncrosses her legs*) Yes, look at him. He had his feet in the air, he had.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I mean your cousin, Ethel.

PEG. (*Sits up demurely, then look at ETHEL and turns back to MRS. CHICHESTER*) Her? Oh! Ethel's my cousin?

MRS. CHICHESTER. She is.

ALARIC. (*Rises and goes up level with her*) Yes. And I am, too. Cousin Alaric.

PEG. (*Looks at him a second and laughs, then looks very curiously at ETHEL, looks all round again, turns to MRS. CHICHESTER*) Where's her husband gone to? (*Looking round again*)

(ETHEL *rises.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Husband?

PEG. Yes. I saw her husband. I've been in this room before, you know. I came in that door. She was with her husband.

ALARIC. What in Heaven's name does she mean?

PEG. She sent me to the kitchen. She and him.

ALARIC. Him? Who in the world——?

ETHEL. Mr. Brent. (*Sits*)

ALARIC. Brent. Oh! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

PEG. Ha! Ha! Ha! (ALARIC *stops laughing suddenly, turns away, and stands by desk L. Pause. To MRS. CHICHESTER*) She thought I was a servant lookin' for a place, and I've got my very best hat on, too. Mr. Hawkes told me not to say a word. He said, "you go up to the lady's house and you wait, and when I get there I'll do all the talking. That's my business. That's what I get paid for."

HAWKES. (*Comes down level with PEG*) Ssh! Ssh! Ssh! My time short. You must do every-

thing your aunt tells you. Try to please her in all things. On the first day of every month I'll call and find out what progress you're making. (*Crosses front of PEG—to MRS. CHICHESTER, handing card*) This is my business address. (*Crossing to table*) Now I must take my leave. (*Takes up his hat*)

PEG. (*Springing up breathlessly and frightenedly*) I'm going with ye, too.

HAWKES. Come, come.

PEG. (*Earnestly—her eyes filling*) My father mightn't like me to stay here, now that my uncle's dead.

HAWKES. It was your uncle's last wish that you should come here. Why, your father will be delighted at your good fortune. Good-bye, Miss O'Connell.

PEG. (*Shaking hands with MR. HAWKES*) Good-bye, Mr. Hawkes. And thank ye for bein' so kind to me.

(ALARIC opens door for HAWKES.)

HAWKES. (*Bows to her*) Miss Chichester. By Jove, I'll just catch the express. (*Looking at his watch*)

ALARIC. Have a cab?

HAWKES. (*Crossing to door L.*) No. No luggage. Like the walk. Good day. (*Exit L.*)

ALARIC. (*Calling off L.*) Jarvis, the door. (*He closes the door and remains by desk L.*)

(PEG *wistfully watches HAWKES go, then looks dejectedly at the floor, then sits in chair again.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Severely*) Your name is Margaret.

PEG. (*Quickly*) Peg. (*Catches herself*) My name is Peg.

(ALARIC sits at desk.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. That is only a corruption. We will call you Margaret.

PEG. (*Pause*) All right. But don't blame me if I'm not there, will ye? (ALARIC bangs desk) I'm very much afraid indeed that I'll forget to answer to the name of Margaret. My name is Peg anyway. My father always calls me Peg. It will put me in mind of my father.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Kindly leave your father out of our conversation.

PEG. (*Rises, to MRS. CHICHESTER, with a sudden flash of anger*) Then it's all I will leave him out of.

MRS. CHICHESTER. No temper, if you please. (PEG sits down breathing hard. *Pause*) You must take my daughter as your model in all things. (PEG looks at ETHEL, half inclined to cry, half to laugh) Everything she does you must try to imitate. You cannot have a better example. Mould yourself on her.

PEG. (*Tries to sit as ETHEL is sitting, to pose as she does, to arrange her dress as she has hers arranged. Imitates her*) "Please don't. It's so hot this mornin'." (*Laughs*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. What do you mean?

PEG. We have a little joke together, haven't we? (*To ETHEL*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rising, to PEG*) You have a great deal to learn.

PEG. Yes, aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Until some decent c'otches can be procured for you we'll find some from my daughter's wardrobe.

PEG. Sure, I've got a beautiful silk dress that I wear to Mass on Sunday. It's a very pretty silk dress. I couldn't wear it on the ship because it would get all wet. I can't wear my Sunday clothes.

ma'am. I must wear my traveling suit when I'm traveling.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rising—checking PEG*) That will do. Ring, Alaric. (*ALARIC crosses back of table to bell and rings. To PEG*) You must try to realize that you have an opportunity very few girls in your position are ever given. I only hope you will try to repay our interest and your late uncle's wishes by obedience, good conduct, and hard study.

PEG. (*Meekly, her eyes twinkling with mischief*) My dress has lace on it, too, you know. (*MRS. CHICHESTER turns away*) Well, I don't want you to think my father doesn't buy me any pretty clothes. I have some grand dresses.

(*Enter JARVIS L.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Jarvis, tell Bennett to show my niece to the Mauve Room and to attend her.

JARVIS. Yes, ma'am. (*Goes to top of stairs*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Now go with him.

PEG. Of course, I know this suit is very old, and should be mended and pressed. I wish I'd worn my silk dress. (*Rises and crosses to L. c. to ETHEL*) I've got two silk dresses, Miss. I've got a blue one and a pink one. The blue one is my going-to-Mass dress. It's dark blue. And the pink one is my party dress. It has a black velvet sash on it—a wide black velvet sash. (*ETHEL looks away*) It's very black, too, it is. (*ETHEL takes no notice. PEG sees dog*) Hello! I've got two silk dresses. Did you know that? (*As dog takes no notice PEG goes to table L. c.*) Devil a bit he cares about dresses. (*If dog is friendly, and goes to PEG, she takes him up saying*) Look at that now. He's very friendly. Dogs like me, dogs do. (*Puts down dog*) You'll have to get over that, young fellow. Nice and

friendly. I wonder where he picked it up. (*If dog jumps up and down, make him do it two or three times, and say*) I'm a dog-trainer, I am. He should be on wheels.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Now go with him.

PEG. Yes, ma'am. (*Turns to JARVIS and laughs, then looks at ETHEL, then at MRS. CHICHESTER, then at ALARIC*) Of course I'll try to do everything you want me to do, but I'm very far away, and it's all so strange, and I do miss my father so much— (*Checks herself*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Coldly*) Go with him.

PEG. Yes, ma'am. (*Bobs, then shrinks into herself, creeps quietly upstairs L., looks at JARVIS, who does not move*) He's not going. (*Or, He doesn't know where to go. Business with JARVIS. They exit*)

(ALARIC, ETHEL and MRS. CHICHESTER look at each other.)

ALARIC. (*R. to ETHEL*) Eh?

ETHEL. (*On bench L.*) Awful!

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*C.*) Terrible!

ALARIC. (*Leaning on chair R.*) It's our unlucky day.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*C.*) One thing is absolutely necessary. She must be kept away from everyone for the present.

ALARIC. I should say so. Good Lord! Jerry! He mustn't see her. He'd laugh his head off at the idea of me having a relation like that. He'll probably run in for lunch.

(ETHEL rises, picks up dog, and crosses up to foot of stairs.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. She must remain in her room

until he's gone. Meanwhile I'll go into town and order some things for her and see about tutors. She's got to be taught, and at once. (*Crosses to desk and picks up list*)

ETHEL. But why put up with it at all, Mother?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Turns to ETHEL*) One thousand pounds a year. That's the reason. And rather than you should have to make any sacrifice, dear, I'd put up with worse than that.

ETHEL. Yes, I believe you would. I wouldn't. (*Up the stairs*)

ALARIC. Where are you off to, Ethel?

ETHEL. (*At head of stairs*) To make up my mind, if I can, about something. The coming of Peg may do it for me. (*Exit L. upstairs*)

ALARIC. I'll go with you, Mater, as far as the Station Road, and see if I can head Jerry off. (*Looks at watch*) His train is due if it's punctual. (*Crosses to piano and gets hat*)

(*Enter JARVIS L. with fresh flowers.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To JARVIS*) Oh, Jarvis, my niece is not to leave her room without my permission.

JARVIS. Yes, ma'am.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Come, Alaric. (*Goes to door L. in front of JARVIS, who holds it open*)

ALARIC. (*Crossing L.*) Any callers, Jarvis, we'll be back to lunch. One sharp. (*Exit L., following Mrs. Chichester out. MAID comes downstairs laughing. They exchange looks. The maid nods in the direction of upstairs and laughs*)

JARVIS (*To maid*) Bennett. (*JARVIS crosses to back of table c., MAID to L. of table*)

MAID. Well? Have you seen her?

JARVIS. I have.

MAID. Have you ever seen anything like her?

JARVIS. Never in my life. Bring me over the vase, will you?

(MAID gets vase from desk L.)

MAID. What do you make of her?

(JARVIS goes up to back for vase.)

JARVIS. (Comes back to table) Every family I've served had its family skeleton. That's ours.

MAID. (Putting flowers in vase) A niece?

JARVIS. So they say.

MAID. She hasn't a rag to her back. I'd be ashamed to be dressed as she is. You should see the one she goes to Mass in.

JARVIS. I did. All wrapped up in "The Irish Times". And I get ragged for putting her in the kitchen. (Goes to back with flowers) Looked too good for her. And, what do you think? That dog tried to bite me.

MAID. Where is the dog now?

JARVIS. Tied up in the stables, worrying the horses.

(Door bangs. Slam L.)

MAID. They're gone. (Goes to stairs, half way up)

JARVIS. (Comes to chair front of table) Oh, Bennett. The niece is not to leave her room without permission. You'd better tell her.

MAID. (Going upstairs) Oh, my! These poor relations. (Lightning effect.)

(JARVIS puts chair back to L. of table, picks up paper, and crossing L. to desk. Down the path comes a man who makes straight for the R. U.)

E. *He is JERRY, a tall, athletic, breezy, tanned, broad-shouldered, energetic young man of twenty-six, magnetic in all he says and does. He swings in briskly through arch R. U. E.)*

JERRY. Hullo, Jarvis. How are you?

JARVIS. Quite nicely, thank you, sir.

JERRY. (*Puts hat on table c.*) Where's everyone? (*Down R.*)

JARVIS. Just drove away, sir. (*Comes L. of table*)

JERRY. (*Sits armchair R.*) What time's lunch?

JARVIS. One, sir.

JERRY. All well?

JARVIS. Yes, sir.

JERRY. Anything new?

JARVIS. (*L. c.*) No, sir. (*Coughs. Pause. Looks up the stairs*) Yes, sir. There's a new (*Slight pause*) mare in the stable, sir. Came yesterday.

JERRY. (*R. c.*) Miss Ethel's?

JARVIS. Yes, sir.

JERRY. I'll go and have a look at her. (*Starts up R., picking up hat*)

JARVIS. There's a strange dog tied to the door, sir. Better walk round him, sir. Snappy.

JERRY. A new dog, too, eh? Mr. Alaric's?

JARVIS. No, sir.

JERRY. Whose is it?

JARVIS. It just came, sir.

(*Thunder effect.*)

JERRY. What breed?

JARVIS. It might be anything, sir.

(*Thunder effect.*)

JERRY. I'll look that over, too. (*Thunder rolls*)

in the distance) Hullo, storm's blowing up. If Mr. Alaric turns up send him out to me, will you?
(*Goes off*)

(*The sound of voices upstairs is heard, and the maid appears, followed by PEG. PEG is in her going-to-Mass dress. JARVIS arranges books and magazines on table c.*)

MAID. The missus said——

PEG. (*Down stairs*) I'll come out of my room if I want to.

MAID. The missus said you were not to leave your room.

PEG. I want to tell you something, Miss.— It's a long time since I had a nurse. (*Comes down-stairs. Locks at JARVIS*) It's a funny job you've got, isn't it? (*Goes to c. of table*) Standing round, looking mad all the time. (*Goes R.*) I'll come down in your parlor if I want to. What's a parlor for but to keep company in? Well, I'm company and this is the parlor, so we're all right.

JARVIS. (*To MAID*) Well?

MAID. (*L. c. to PEG*) You'll only get me into trouble.

PEG. I wouldn't do that for all the world. I'll get all the throuble, Miss. I'll get it now. (*Goes to door L., opens it, and calls*) Ant! Aurnt! I want to see your parlor, and your nurse won't let me.

MAID. They've all gone out.

PEG. (*Comes back to c., closing door*) Well, why didn't you tell me they'd all gone out. You let me shout my head off, and then tell me they've all gone out. You'd better go out too. (*They do not move*) Go on with you. (*JARVIS and MAID move towards door L., then stop and turn. To JARVIS*) I don't know whether to laugh or cry at him. (*MAID laughs. She and JARVIS look at each*

other in amazement, and exeunt L. Lightning. Examines all the things, which are new to her. Laughs. Sees Cupid on piano, runs to it, and claps her hands) Hullo, Cupid, ye darling. You're the one that causes all the mischief in the world, ye devil. (Thunder. Sits end of piano-stool and crosses herself) Oh, Holy Mary! (She covers into herself and prays. JERRY appears with Michael in his arms. It has grown very dark. Lightning. PEG trembles in terror, her back to JERRY)

JERRY. (Comes down L. to L. c.) Hello!

PEG. (Turns quickly) Michael! (Thunder. Runs to JERRY, snatches dog from him, and runs over to L., chattering with fear and looking suspiciously at JERRY. JERRY looks at PEG in astonishment. Two flashes of lightning) Shut it out! Shut it out! Shut the storm out! (JERRY draws the curtains and comes down to PEG) That's right, sir. (Explaining to JERRY) Don't go near the dog. You mustn't come near the dog. (Puts dog outside door L.) Dogs attract lightning.

JERRY. (Looking at her in amazement) Does he belong to you?

PEG. (Nods) What were you doin' with him?

JERRY. I found him barking at a very high-spirited mare.

PEG. Mare? Where?

(Lightning.)

JERRY. (R. of table) Tied to the stable door.

PEG. The stable? Is that where they put Michael?

(Thunder.)

JERRY. (Coming down c.) Don't be frightened. It's only a summer storm.

PEG. (*In awe*) Summer or winter, they shrivel me up.

JERRY. Come and look at it. They're beautiful in this part of the country. Come and watch it. (*Going to window at back and lifting curtain*)

(*Lightning.*)

PEG. (*Sits L. of table*) Shut it out! Shut it out! I'll not look at it at all. They say if you look at the sky when the lightning comes ye can see the Kingdom of Heaven. And the sight of it blinds some and kills others accordin' to the state of grace ye're in.

(*Lightning.*)

JERRY. (*Coming down R. of table*) You're a Catholic?

PEG. Of course I'm a Catholic. What else is anybody? (*Thunder*) It does seem to me that He is very angry with us for our sins.

JERRY. With me, perhaps, not with you.

PEG. What do you mane by that?

JERRY. You don't know what sin is.

PEG. And who may you be, to talk to me like that?

JERRY. My name is Jerry. What's yours?

PEG. *Peg.* (*Looks round at stairs*) That's what it is, too, Peg. Jerry, did ye say?

(*Rain.*)

JERRY. Just plain Jerry. And you're Peg?

PEG. (*Nods*) Just plain Peg.

JERRY. (*Comes down R. of table and sits*) I don't agree with you. I think you're very charming.

PEG. (*Seated L. of table*) You mustn't say things like that—with the storm outside.

JERRY. (*Coming down R. c.*) I mean it.

PEG. Ye don't. The man that thinks them things never says them to your face. My father always said to me "Now, Peg, there's one sort of a fellow you've got to be very careful of, and that's the one that says flattering things right in your face. "He's no good," he says. "He's no good."

JERRY. Who are you?

PEG. Did ye ever see such a funny-looking sofa as that one? What do ye do with it? Do ye sit on it, or lie down on it?

JERRY. Whichever you like.

PEG. I think it should have a back and some handles if it wants to be a sofa.

JERRY. Who are you?

PEG. (*Rises*) And look here. I've found another funny one over here. (*Crosses and sits in chair L.*) Do you know what this is? It's a high-chair. I never heard of anybody keeping a high-chair in the parlor, did you? And I never heard of anybody buying a sofa that looks like a bench. (*Crosses to him, sliding on carpet*) And the carpet—it's a slippery carpet. I can make poses on it. (*Slides back to him, posing. JERRY laughs. PEG slides to bench and back again*) We have a carpet home. But our carpet's not slippery. This must be a cheap one. Our carpet has roses on it, big red and yellow roses. Makes the room more cheerful—more like a parlor.

JERRY. Who in the world are you?

PEG. Do you know Alaric?

JERRY. Yes, of course.

PEG. I wish I could take him home and show him to my father.

JERRY. Who are you?

PEG. (*L. c.*) And the big fellow. Are you acquainted with the big fellow who works in this house?

JERRY. The big fellow? I don't think I know him.

PEG. He's all in front of himself.

JERRY. (R. C.) Oh, you mean Jarvis.

PEG. Jarvis. Do you know all he does to make his living—that great big strong fellow? He just carries round a little card on a big plate, to tell who's coming to the house. (*She turns and points to the bench again*)

JERRY. Now, who in the world are you?

PEG. You asked me that before, didn't you?

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. Well, I'm my aunt's niece, I am. (*Sitting on sofa. Pause*)

JERRY. (*On sofa, smiling*) And who is your aunt?

PEG. Mrs. Chi—ch—es—es—cher.

(*Lights slowly up to full.*)

JERRY. Who?

PEG. Mrs. Chi—ch—es—es.

JERRY. Mrs. Chichester.

PEG. That's it. You have to jump it in the middle.

JERRY. Really? How extraordinary!

PEG. Isn't it? You wouldn't expect a fine lady like her to have a niece like me, would ye?

JERRY. That isn't what I meant.

PEG. Yes, it is. And you mustn't tell untruths with the storm outside.

JERRY. I was thinking that I don't remember Alaric ever telling me he had such a charming cousin. (*By sofa L.*)

PEG. Alaric didn't know I was alive till I dropped down from the clouds this morning.

JERRY. Where did you drop from?

PEG. New York.

JERRY. Really? How odd!

(*Stop rain.*)

PEG. Not at all. It's just the same as any other big city. There's nothing odd about New York. It's a big place, New York is.

JERRY. (*Hesitatingly, and with pronounced English accent*) Were you born there?

PEG. What was that you said?

JERRY. I said, "Were you born there?"

PEG. Yes, I was.

JERRY. By way of Old Ireland?

PEG. How did you guess that?

JERRY. Your slight, but delightful, accent.

PEG. I've got an accent?

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. Well, I was much too polite to say anything, but I was thinking you had an accent. (JERRY laughs) What are you laughing at? Haven't you ever listened to yourself?

JERRY. No. I can't say I have.

PEG. Well, you said to me just now "Were you born there?" (*Imitating him*)

JERRY. Well, how would you say it?

PEG. I'd say it naturally—"Were you born there?" I'd say. "Were you born there?" I wouldn't fall over my words. I'd say it straight out of my face. I wouldn't make a song-and-dance out of it.

JERRY. (*Sits beside her. She moves a little away*) I see. (*Laughing*) Hello! (*Goes to window and pulls curtains open*) The storm's over. All the anger has gone from the heavens. See! (*Draws open the curtains*)

(*Lights full up.*)

PEG. (*Under her breath*) Praise be to God for that!

JERRY. (*Coming down R.*) Are you going to stay here?

PEG. Mebbe I will. Mebbe I won't.

JERRY. Did your aunt send for you?

PEG. No: my uncle Nat.

JERRY. Nat?

PEG. Nathaniel Kingsnorth, God rest his soul

JERRY. Nathaniel Kingsnorth?

PEG. (*Seated on couch, nods*) Sleepin' in his grave, poor man!

JERRY. (*Crosses to back to bench L.*) Then you're Margaret O'Connell?

PEG. I am. How did you know that?

JERRY. Why, I—(*Goes to sit—sees her look*) May I sit here?

PEG. That's what you said it was for. Go on and sit.

(*JERRY sits back to audience.*)

JERRY. I was with your uncle when he died.

PEG. Were ye?

JERRY. He told me all about you.

PEG. Did he? I wish the poor man 'd have lived. (*Pause*) I wish he'd sent for me sooner. He with all his money and my father with none, and me his sister's only child.

JERRY. What does your father do?

PEG. (*On couch L., eagerly*) Anything. My father can do anything at all. Except make money. And when he does make it he can't keep it. He doesn't like money. Neither do I. (*Pause*) I've never had much to like. But I've seen others around us with plenty, and we've been the happiest—that we have. When times were the hardest I never heard a word of complaint from my father or

saw a frown on his face. (*Pause*) Sure, we're more like boy and girl than father and daughter. (*Pause*) And I'm sick for the sight of him. (*Pause*) And I'm sure he is for me—for his "Peg—o'—my—heart", as he always calls me. (*Covers her eyes*) I wish I was back home.

JERRY. (*Gently*) Don't do that.

PEG. (*Wiping her eyes with a large handkerchief, which is fastened—folded—by a safety-pin to her dress*) I don't cry very often. (*Pause*) My father never made me. I never saw him cry but twice in my life. Once when he'd made a little money and we had a Mass said for my mother's soul and had the most beautiful candles lit on Our Lady's altar. And when I left him to come here. (*Pause*) He laughed and joked with me up to the last minute, and when the ship swung away from the dock he just broke down and sobbed like a little child. "My Peg", he kept sayin', "My little Peg". And I wanted to get off the ship and go to him. But we'd started, and I didn't know how to swim. (*Pause*) I cried myself to sleep that night. I'm not going to be happy here. (*Pause*) I only came here because my father thought it'd be for my good. (*Pause*) And they won't make a lady out of me if I can help it. (*Pause*) Ye can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. That's what my father said. And that's what I am—a sow's ear.

JERRY. (*Rises. Crosses c., gently*) I don't agree with you.

PEG. (*Wiping her eyes*) I don't care whether ye do or not. I'm—a sow's ear, I am.

JERRY. (*c.*) When the strangeness wears off you'll be very happy here.

PEG. What makes ye think that?

JERRY. Because you'll know that you are pleasing your father.

PEG. But I'm all alone——

JERRY. You're among friends.

PEG. (*Shakes her head*) They're ashamed of me.

JERRY. (c.) Oh, no.

PEG. They are. They sent me to the kitchen when I first came here. And they put Michael to sleep in the stable. I want to tell you Michael's not used to sleeping in a stable. We never had any. That was a quick joke, wasn't it? Michael has always slept with my father ever since he was a little bit of a puppy. (*Crosses him to R. c.*) Michael, I mean. I thought you might think I meant my father.

JERRY. When they really get to know you they'll be just as proud of you as your father is—as I'd be.

PEG. (*To corner of piano, looks at him, then picks up music*) You'd be? (*Pause*) Why should you be proud (*Pause*) of me?

JERRY. I'd be more than proud if you'd look on me as a friend.

PEG. But I don't know who ye are at all. do I?

JERRY. (*Sitting on table R.*) Oh, I can give you some very good references. For instance, I was up at the same college as your cousin Alaric.

PEG. (*Sits on piano-stool*) Were ye? Well, I would mention that to very few people.

JERRY. Don't you want me to be your friend?

PEG. I don't know. I'm like the widow's pig that was put in a rale bed to sleep in. The pig neither wanted it nor it didn't want it. It had done without it all its life, and it wasn't cryin' its heart out for the loss of somethin' it had never had and didn't miss. (*JERRY laughs heartily*) I want to tell you that's one thing that's in your favor.

JERRY. What is?

PEG. The laughter's not dead in ye as it is in everybody else in this house. (*Looking at him with more interest, puts down music. He laughs*

three times. PEG laughs with him, then goes to him) Say, who are ye at all?

JERRY. No one in particular.

PEG. Well, I can see that. I mean, what do ye do?

JERRY. (On table R. c.) Everything a little and nothing really well. I was a soldier for a while, then I took a splash at doctoring; read law; civil-engineered in South America for a year—now I'm farming.

PEG. (R. by table) Ye're a farmer?

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. (Laughs) Where's your whiskers?

JERRY. I'm a new farmer. (Laughs) To sum up my career, I can do a whole lot of things fairly well, and none of them well enough to brag about.

PEG. Like my father, that is.

JERRY. You flatter me.

PEG. I know I flatter you. There's not a man in the whole world like my father.

JERRY. No. Of course not.

PEG. No. Not one man in the whole world, there isn't. (Pause, she goes round to back of table c. JERRY gets R. of table) But he says he's a rolling stone, and they don't amount to much in a hard-hearted world that's all for making dollars.

JERRY. Your father's right. Money is the standard to-day, and we're all valued by it.

PEG. Yes. And he's got none. (Pause) But he has got me. (Pause. Looks ruefully all round, then gets up resolutely) I'm goin' right back to him now. (Crosses to foot of stairs)

JERRY. No, no. (Round back of table to newel post)

PEG. (On third step) I must. Sure, it's easier to suffer the want of food than the want of love. (Pause. Imitates her father, banging newel post. JERRY starts back) "And that's what the Irish

are doing all over the world. They're driven from their own country. They're made wanderers on the face of the earth, and nothin' they ever earn'll make up to them for the separation from their homes and from their loved ones." (JERRY *laughs*)
Do you know what that is?

JERRY. (*Shakes his head*) I haven't the slightest idea.

PEG. That's one of my father's speeches.

JERRY. One of his speeches?

PEG. My father makes grand speeches.

JERRY. Does he?

PEG. He makes them in the cause of Ireland.

JERRY. (*Smiles. Comes to novel post*) In the cause of Ireland?

PEG. Yes. My mother died when I was a little baby, and my father brought me back to Ireland. I lived there all my life till two months ago, when he had to go back to New York, and they sent for me to come here. I went all through Ireland with my father on his lecture tours. We had a cart. We traveled from place to place in the cart. He made his speeches from the tail of it, and we lived in the middle. My father practised all of his speeches on me first.

JERRY. Oh, did he?

PEG. I know fifty of them by heart.

JERRY. Fifty?

PEG. Yes. I'm going to recite them all to Mrs. Chichester. She'll be very pleased. Nice old lady, she is.

JERRY. Very nice.

PEG. Full of fun. (*They both laugh*) I tell you I'm not used to sour faces. My father's full of jokes. I'm lost without my father. I get very lonesome without him. I'm going back to him, too. (*She goes upstairs*)

JERRY. (*Following her and leaning over balus-*

trade) Wait! Think! Just give us one month's trial. One month. It's very little out of your life, and I promise you your father will not suffer by it, except in losing you for that one little month. (*Pause*) Will you? Please do. Just a month?

PEG. (*Coming down to bottom step*) Why do you want me to stay here?

JERRY. Because—because your uncle was my friend. It was his last wish to do something for you. (*Pause*) Will you? Just a month?

PEG. Not any more than a month.

JERRY. Not unless you wish it.

PEG. All right. I don't suppose I'll mind a month. It's going to seem like a lifetime in this place. (*Coming down L.*)

JERRY. I'm glad. (*Down into L. c., level with her*)

PEG. Glad it's going to seem like a lifetime?

JERRY. (*Smiling*) No. That you're going to stay.

PEG. (*Crossing R. to R. c.*) That's a comfort anyway. Some one in the house'll be pleased at my stayin'—(*Pause*)

JERRY. (*Following her*) I am—immensely.

PEG. Yes. I heard you say it.

JERRY. (*Nearer to her*) And will you look on me as your friend?

PEG. (*Looks at him quickly, then moves away R.*) I don't know who you are, do I?

JERRY. (*Following*) Is it so difficult?

PEG. I don't know at all. I don't know whether it's difficult or not till I thry it. (*Goes away R.*)

JERRY. (*Following PEG*) Try.

PEG. I don't understand you.

JERRY. Yet I'm very simple.

PEG. Devil doubt that. (*Crosses to R. corner, sits in high chair, sees he is quite near her*) Where

do you think you'll go now? (JERRY *holds out his hand*) What's that for?

JERRY. To our friendship.

PEG. I never met anybody like you in all my life before. (*Looks at his hand*)

JERRY. Shake hands on it.

PEG. I don't think it's necessary.

JERRY. Do.

PEG. I don't shake hands with every Tom, Dick and Harry I meet.

JERRY. Come.

PEG. Queer fish, you are. (*Gives her hand*)

JERRY. (*Holds it*) Friends?

PEG. Not yet. Not so fast.

JERRY. I'll wager we will be.

PEG. Don't put much on it. Ye might lose.

JERRY. I'll stake my life on it.

PEG. Ye don't value it much, then.

JERRY. More than I did. (PEG *looks at him*)
May you be very happy here, Peg.

(*Door slam.*)

PEG. (*Crosses and runs upstairs. JERRY watches her in amazement*) Don't tell anybody you saw me down in this room. (*She turns to go, meets ETHEL at top of stairs, turns comes downstairs, meets MRS. CHICHESTER and ALARIC entering door L. She turns completely round, and finally sits at bottom of stairs*)

(MRS. CHICHESTER *goes c. to JERRY, who shakes hands with her.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. So sorry we were out. You'll stay to lunch?

JERRY. It's what I came for. (MRS. CHICHESTER *crosses to R. JERRY shakes hands with ETHEL, who*

also goes down R. to her mother, telling her that PEG is on the stairs)

ALARIC. (*Crosses to L. C. Slouches over to JERRY, who meets him L. C.*) What ho! Jerry!

JERRY. (*Slips his arm through ALARIC'S and takes him to windows, seeing PEG on stairs in passing*) I say, Al, your cousin's adorable.

ALARIC. What?

JERRY. Simply adorable.

(*They talk by windows.*)

ALARIC. Oh, I say, adorable!

(*ETHEL points out PEG to MRS. CHICHESTER, then sits on piano-stool.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret! Margaret!
(*MRS. CHICHESTER looks round at newel post and PEG comes out and goes to MRS. CHICHESTER*)
Who gave you permission to come in here?

PEG. No one at all. I just walked in.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Go to your room and stay there until I give you leave to come out.

PEG. (*Passionately*) Sure, if this house is going to be a prison I'm going back to my father.

(*Lunch gong L.*)

ALARIC. (*Coming down R. C.*) There we are! Lunch, everyone!

JERRY. (*Coming down L. C.*) At last! I'm starving!

PEG. So am I. I haven't had a bite since six.

JERRY. (*Offering PEG his arm*) Allow me.

MRS. CHICHESTER. My niece is tired after her journey. She will lunch in her room.

PEG. I'm not a bit tired, and I'd rather have lunch down here with Mr. Jerry.

ALARIC. Oh, I say,—Mr. Jerry!

JERRY. And so you shall have lunch with Mr. Jerry. Come along—let us lead the way. (*Goes off with PEG on his arm, PEG looking back impishly at the others and then smiling up at JERRY*)

PEG. I'm not so sure about that wager of yours. I think your life is safe. I want to tell ye ye saved my life. I'm so hungry my soul is hanging by a thread.

Slow curtain

MRS. CHICHESTER. She must be taught, and at once.

(ACT I plays sixty-two minutes.)

ACT II

"THE REBELLION OF PEG".

SCENE: *A month afterwards. A July evening.*

At rise of curtain PEG is discovered lying on couch L. C. intently reading a large, handsomely-bound volume. JARVIS noiselessly shows in BRENT, who is in automobile garb—light overcoat on, cap in hand—and exits. BRENT puts coat and cap on window-seat, moves down L. C. near couch, sees PEG, and looks down at her as he takes gloves off. He bangs glove on hand. PEG looks up, meeting BRENT'S admiring gaze.

BRENT. (*Comes down R. of couch*) It must be absorbing. (*PEG shuts book and moves into sitting position. She is then seen to be charmingly gowned, her hair dressed a la mode*) What's the book? (*PEG puts her hands over the title and looks at him distrustfully. BRENT walks round couch, sits beside PEG, smiling appreciatingly at her. PEG jumps up and stands defiantly, her eyes flashing angrily*) You mustn't be angry, child. (*Points to book*) What is it? Something forbidden? (*Leering*) Show me. (*Holds out his hand. PEG smacks it. PEG crosses R. to R. corner of piano, puts book under piano cover, and faces BRENT*) Aha! A hiding place! Now you make me really curious. Let me look at it. (*Goes to her. PEG stands at bay, ready to defend the identity of the book*) I love spirit. Why, what a wonderful change in a month! You'd most certainly not be sent to the kitchen now. (*Pause. He sits on arm of armchair R.*) Do you

know you've grown into a most attractive young woman? (PEG ejaculates) Oh, you are really delightful when you're angry. And you are angry, aren't you? And with me. I'm sorry I offended you. Let us kiss and be friends. (He takes her left hand, and as he bends near her she gives him a resounding box on the ears. BRENT gives a muffled ejaculation and tries to take her in his arms. Enter ETHEL L. PEG, panting with anger, glares at him, then rushes straight out through arch R. U. E. BRENT follows her up to R. U. E., swings round, sees ETHEL. stops, then goes to her with outstretched hand, and comes down R. to front of table) Why, my dear Ethel!

ETHEL. (Ignoring his hand, comes to c.) Why did she run away?

BRENT. (To c., smiling easily and confidently) I'd surprised one of her secrets and she flew into a temper. Did you see her strike me?

ETHEL. Secrets?

BRENT. Yes. Here we are. (Goes to R. of piano, turns up piano cover, takes out book, opens it, reads) "The Love Stories of the World"—"To Peg from Jerry". Jerry! Oho! No wonder she didn't want me to see it. (Puts it back and covers it up) Jerry, eh? (Goes to ETHEL) So that's how the land lies! Romantic little child! (To ETHEL) Now, Ethel, I—

ETHEL. (Looking steadily at him) Why don't you go after her? (Nodding in the direction in which PEG ran)

BRENT. Ethel!

ETHEL. She's new and has all the virtues

BRENT. I assure you—

ETHEL. You needn't. If there's one thing I'm convinced of it's your assurance. (Crosses R.)

BRENT. Really, Ethel—

ETHEL. (Going R., and sitting in armchair) Were you "carried away" again?

BRENT. Do you think—?

ETHEL. Yes. I do.

BRENT. (*Hunting for an explanation*) I—I don't know what to say.

ETHEL. Better say nothing.

BRENT. (C.) Surely you're not jealous—of a—child?

ETHEL. (*Slowly*) No. I don't think it's jealousy.

BRENT. Then what is it?

ETHEL. (*Looking scornfully at him*) Disgust. (*Shrugs her shoulders contemptuously*) Now I understand why the kitchen is sometimes the rival of the drawing-room. The love of change.

BRENT. (*Crosses L. C., and turns back*) This is not worthy of you.

ETHEL. That is what rankles. It isn't. You're not.

BRENT. (*Coming back*) Ethel—

ETHEL. (*Seated R. C.*) If that ever happened again I should have to—amputate you. (*Pause. He turns up to window-seat for coat*) Chris! (*He turns*) Come here! (*BRENT comes back to her. She smiles*) My nerves have been tried this past month.

BRENT. Poor Ethel! (*Pause*)

ETHEL. Put a mongrel into a kennel of thorough-breds and they'll either destroy the intruder or be in a condition of unsettled, irritating intolerance. (*Pause*) That's exactly my condition. (*Pause*) I'm unsettled, irritable, intolerant.

BRENT. (*Crosses to ETHEL*) Then I came in time.

ETHEL. (*Smiles as she looks straight through him*) So did I. Didn't I?

BRENT. Don't. Please don't. (*Crosses L., turns away*)

ETHEL. Very well. I won't. (*Pause. He turns*)

to her again) I'm sorry, Chris. (*Pause. She looks up at him*) A month ago it wouldn't have mattered. Just now—it did. I'd rather looked forward to seeing you. It's been horrible here.

BRENT. It's been a month of misery for me too. But I'm going away—out of it—to-morrow.

ETHEL. Are you? Where?

BRENT. (*Taking stage to L. c.*) Norway—Moscow—Siberia.

ETHEL. Oh! The *cold* places! Going alone?

BRENT. (*Crosses R., bending over ETHEL*) Yes. Unless *someone* goes with me.

ETHEL. Naturally.

BRENT. *Will you go?*

ETHEL. (*Rises*) I wish I'd been here when you called—instead of that *brat*.

BRENT. (*Turns away to table*) Good God—

ETHEL. One doesn't mind an *equal* so much—but that—

BRENT. (*Crossing to L.*) This is unbearable.

ETHEL. (*Crosses to c.*) Your wife all over again, eh?

BRENT. (*Coming down L. of table to ETHEL c.*) No. I place you far above her—above all petty suspicion and carping narrowness. I value you as a woman of understanding.

ETHEL. (*Meaningly*) I am. From what you've told me about your wife, *she* is, too.

BRENT. (*Turns away distractedly*) Don't treat me like this.

ETHEL. What shall I *do*? (*He looks at her*) Apologize? That's odd. I've been waiting for yours. (*Crosses to piano*)

BRENT. Oh! (*Moves restlessly away to up L. c.*)

(ALARIC hurries in from L.)

ALARIC. Hello! H'are ye? (*Shakes hands with BRENT*) Disturbing you?

BRENT. Not at all—no.

ALARIC. The angel wife all right?

BRENT. Very well, thank you.

ALARIC. And the darling child?

BRENT. Quite well, thank you.

ALARIC. Splendid! (*Crossing to ETHEL at back of table*) Seen Margaret?

ETHEL. (*Nods in direction of garden*) Out there.

ALARIC. Mater wants her. Got to have a family meetin' about her. Mater'll be here in a minute. (*To BRENT*) Just the family! (*Hurries out through R. U. E.*)

BRENT. (*Hurries to ETHEL at back of table*) I'm at the hotel. I'll be there until morning. Send me a message. Will you? I'll wait up all night for one. Will you?

ETHEL. (*At piano R.*) Perhaps, Chris.

BRENT. Oh, I'm sorry if anything I've said or done has hurt you.

ETHEL. Don't say any more.

BRENT. Oh, if you only—(*ETHEL checks him as door L. opens and Mrs. CHICHESTER enters. MAID comes downstairs at same moment, opening R. curtain*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. How do you do? (*At L. c., bowing to BRENT. Turns to maid. ETHEL sits R. c.*) When did you see my niece last?

(*BRENT to window-seat, gets cap and coat.*)

MAID. Not this hour, ma'am.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Tell Jarvis to search the gardens.

MAID. Yes, ma'am. (*Starts towards arch R.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Comes to L. of table c.*) Tell Jarvis—(*MAID stops*)—to search the stables.

MAID. Yes, ma'am. (*Starts R. again*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Tell Jarvis—(MAID *stops*)
—to look up and down the road.

MAID. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit arch R. U. E. BRENT comes down L. of Mrs. CHICHESTER*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Turning to BRENT*) Forgive me, Mr. Brent. I'm sorry.

BRENT. Not at all. I'm just leaving. (*Crosses L., bows to her, shakes hands*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, you needn't—

BRENT. (*Going towards door L.*) I'm going abroad to-morrow. I just called to say good-bye.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I trust you and Mrs. Brent will have a very pleasant trip.

BRENT. Thank you. (*Passes out L.*)

(ALARIC *re-enters through R. U. E. ETHEL sits armchair R.*)

ALARIC. Not a sign of Margaret anywhere. (*Comes down R., fanning himself with his handkerchief*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. This cannot go on. (*Sits L. of table*)

ALARIC. (*Sits R. of table*) I should think not, indeed.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Mr. Hawkes writes that he will call to-morrow for his first report. (*Seated L. of table*) What am I to tell him?

ALARIC. (*R. of table*) What will you? (*JARVIS and MAID enter R. U. E., and cross slowly to L.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Am I to tell him that every tutor I've engaged for her has resigned? That no maid will stay with her? Am I to tell him that?

ALARIC. Serve her jolly-well right if you did. Eh, Ethel?

ETHEL. It would.

MAID. I've searched everywhere, ma'am. Not a sign of her.

JARVIS. Not in the stables nor up or down the road. And the dog's missing.

ETHEL. Pet?

JARVIS. No, not Pet, Miss. *She's gnawing a bone on the lawn. The other—Michael.*

MRS. CHICHESTER. That will do. (*Exeunt JARVIS and MAID L. I. E.*) Where is she?

ALARIC. Heavens knows.

MRS. CHICHESTER. If only I could throw the whole business up!

ALARIC. Wish to goodness we *could*. But the monthly cheque will be useful to-morrow, Mater. Let's give the little beggar another month of it. Let her off lightly this time, and the moment the lawyer-bird's gone read her the Riot Act. Pull her up with a jerk. Ride her on the curb, and no rot.

(*Suddenly through the open windows comes the sound of two dogs barking furiously and snapping at each other.*)

(DOG FIGHT)

ETHEL. Pet! (*Jumps up and hurries out through arch R. U. E. ALARIC and MRS. CHICHESTER go to windows. c.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret!

ALARIC. (*Up at window c., lifting the curtain*) And the mongrel! She's urging him on. The terrier's got Pet now. (*Calling*) Fight him, old girl! Maul him! Whoa there! Pet's down. There's Ethel on the scene.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Go and separate them.

ALARIC. Not me. I'll talk to 'em. Stop it! Stop it now, when I tell you! Ethel can handle 'em. I hate the little brutes—all hair and teeth. (*Coming down R.*) Can't understand women coddling those little masses of snarling, smelly wool.

(The sound stops. *ETHEL enters, flushed and angry, soothing the ruffled Pct. She goes down to couch. A little later PEG enters with the victorious Michael in her arms. She has a roguish look of triumph in her eyes. She, too, is flushed and excited, and follows *ETHEL* to bench.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Angrily*) Take that animal out of the room.

PEG. (*Goes over to R.*) Come on, Ethel. Let him finish it.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Take that dog out of the room! (*PEG turns and walks out into the garden. MRS. CHICHESTER comes to front of table and lets her get some distance away*) Margaret! Margaret! (*Pause*) Come here! Do you hear me?

PEG. (*Outside. Without moving*) Can Michael come in?

MRS. CHICHESTER. You come in, and leave that brute outside. (*Pause*) At once! (*Comes down into c.*)

PEG. (*Leaves Michael outside arch R. U. E., and comes down to MRS. CHICHESTER*) I think it's the silliest thing, this class-distinction between dogs.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Where have you been?

(*ALARIC comes down to armchair R.*)

PEG. (*Down R.*) Down to the seashore.

MRS. CHICHESTER. And why?

PEG. I wanted to give Michael a swim. The tide was high, but he wouldn't go in.

MRS. CHICHESTER. You took Michael down to the seashore in that dress?

(*PEG looks down at it.*)

PEG. No. He wasn't in this dress.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Look at your hair, all over your eyes. What do you think *will* become of you?

PEG. I have hopes of Heaven, like all the Catholics.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Despairingly, to ALARIC and ETHEL*) I give it up. (*Crosses to couch and sits beside ETHEL*)

ALARIC. I should say so.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Is it that you don't wish to improve? Is it that?

PEG. I'll tell you what *I* think it is. I think— (*Gets chair L. of table, brings it down, and sits c.*) —there's a devil in me some place, and every now and again he pops out.

MRS. CHICHESTER. A devil?

PEG. (*Demurely*) Yes, Aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. How dare you use such a word to me?

PEG. I didn't. I used it to myself. I don't know whether there's a devil in you or not. I don't think there is.

MRS. CHICHESTER. To-morrow Mr. Hawkes will call for his first report on you. (*PEG laughs suddenly, then checks herself*) And *why* did you do that?

PEG. I just had a picture of what you're goin' to tell him.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Your manners are abominable.

PEG. Yes, Aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What *am* I to tell Mr. Hawkes?

PEG. I'd tell him the truth and shame the— devil. I would.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh! Don't you wish to remain here?

PEG. Sometimes I do. Sometimes I don't.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Don't I do everything possible for you?

PEG. Yes. You do everything possible *to me*—

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

PEG. *For me. (Singing) For me.*

MRS. CHICHESTER. Why do you constantly disobey me?

PEG. I suppose it's the original sin in me.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

ALARIC. (*Sitting on armchair R.*) Oh, I say, you know! Original sin! Ha! Ha! Ha!

PEG. Ha! Ha! Ha! I never know whether he's laughing or coughing. (*Catches MRS. CHICHESTER'S eye, and stops*) Whenever I did anythin' wilful or disturbin' at home my father always said to me "Now, Peg, that is the original sin in ye, and ye're not to be punished, because ye can't help it." And then he used to punish himself for what I did, and when I saw how it hurt him I wouldn't do it any more. Now, I think that was a grand way to raise a daughter, and I did have an idea that an aunt might be very successful if she tried to raise a niece that way. (*MRS. CHICHESTER looks at her*) Ye see, if you were to punish *yourself* for what I do—(*MRS. CHICHESTER stares at her*)—I might be sorry. But, then, of course I might not, and that would be very hard on you. Ye see, I can't tell about myself.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Your father must have been a very bad influence on you.

PEG. (*Hotly*) My father's the best man in all the world.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret!

PEG. (*Sullenly, looking down*) There was never a man on earth as good as my father. If more girls had fathers born to them as good as my father there'd be less trouble in this world.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Haven't I told you never to contradict me?

PEG. Well, you contradict me all the time. It's not fair if it doesn't work both ways.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret!

PEG. I want to tell you I'd have a much sweeter disposition if you wouldn't talk against my father.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Really, Margaret!

PEG. I don't mind scolding—that has no effect on me whatever.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret!

PEG. I'm surprised at you, I am. You know I'm mad about my father, and you should respect my feelings about him. I respect your feelings about Alaric, don't I?

(ALARIC rises and goes round back to L.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Stop!

PEG. I'd like to know who would have fed and clothed me all these years——

MRS. CHICHESTER. Stop!

PEG. It makes me furious when you talk against my father.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Stop! (PEG opens her mouth to begin again) Stop!

PEG. All right. I've stopped. (Rises, puts chair back, and goes round to R. of table c.) I'll wipe out the whole of the Chichester family the next time you talk against my father, and that's my last word.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (To ETHEL) Oh, it's hopeless. (Rises to c.) If I consent to take charge of you for another period will you promise me you will do your best to show some advancement during the next month?

PEG. (c., level with her) Yes, Aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (c.) And if I get fresh tutors for you will you try to keep them?

PEG. Yes. I will.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To ALARIC, who has gone round back during foregoing, and is now seated on bench by ETHEL*) What do you think?

ALARIC. We might risk it, eh, Ethel?

ETHEL. Don't ask me.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Very well. Begin now. Get your books.

(JARVIS enters.)

PEG. Yes, Aunt. (*Hurriedly gets three books from piano and comes back to table c.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To JARVIS*) Well?

JARVIS. A letter for Miss Chichester. (*Hands it to ETHEL*) By hand, Miss. No answer. (*ETHEL takes it unconcernedly, opens it and reads. JARVIS towards door L. PEG slams book*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Starts*) Oh!

PEG. I beg yer pardon. It shlipped out of my fist.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Fist!

PEG. (*Calls*) Jarvis! Michael's outside. He's had a fight. I'll be very much obliged if you'll put him to bed for me, please.

JARVIS. Yes, Miss. (*Exit through R. U. E.*)

PEG. That's a nice boy, Jarvis.

ALARIC. Boy, Ethel!

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*L. of table c.*) Who's that from, Ethel?

ETHEL. (*Rising*) Mr. Brent.

(PEG listens.)

ALARIC. What on earth does *he* want?

ETHEL. He wants me to do something for him.

ALARIC. Do something?

ETHEL. Yes. I'll answer it here. (*Crosses over to writing-desk, sits, and writes*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To PEG*) Margaret! Now, study for a little while. And do try to keep your hair out of your eyes. (*Business with curls*)

PEG. Yes, Aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Come, Alaric. (*ALARIC rises and crosses to L. of table. MRS. CHICHESTER goes out L.*)

ALARIC. (*To PEG*) Original sin, eh? That's a good one!

PEG. I knew you would be the one to think it was good.

ALARIC. Study all the pretty maps. (*Leans over her*) What's the population of Turkey?

PEG. There's going to be one less in England one day. (*Picks up book, grimaces, and looks threateningly at him*)

ALARIC. (*Starts back*) Little devil!

PEG. He's tuggin' at me now. The little devil hates knowledge. He always tries to stop me gettin' any of it.

ALARIC. (*Laughs*) Ha! Ha! (*Glances across at ETHEL*) Study your cousin. Model yourself on Ethel. Imitate her, eh, what? (*Hurries to door. PEG runs after him with book. Exit L. as she almost throws book at him. As PEG turns back from door he pops his head back into room, and laughs*) Little devil! (*PEG goes for him again, but he shuts door again in time, and escapes*)

(*PEG goes to table and sits watching ETHEL, who finishes her note, takes cigarette, and lights match. Imitating ETHEL, PEG puts down her book, takes cigarette and lights match. ETHEL sees PEG imitating her, gives impatient ejaculation, throws unlighted cigarette on ash-tray, and*

blows out match. PEG, still imitating her, does same.)

ETHEL. (*Rising*) Why do you watch me?

PEG. (*Rising*) Aren't you my model? (*Mischievously. To front of table. ETHEL turns away angrily and starts upstairs. PEG goes to her*) Ethel! I was only fooling. I was trying to have some fun. I was only trying to make you laugh. I want to talk to you.

ETHEL. (*Going up two stairs*) You were told to study.

PEG. (*Comes to newel-post. Pause*) Ye know we are both girls in the same house, of the same family, pretty much of the same age, and you've never said a kind word to me since I've been here. Ye like your dog better than me, don't ye? (*ETHEL fondles Pet*) I'm sorry Michael hurt him. It was my fault. I set him on to do it.

ETHEL. (*Coming down to foot of stairs, turns to her*) You?

PEG. (*At post back of table, nods*) I thought it was a rabbit at a distance. If a dog has got to be a dog it should be made to look like a dog. Ye'd know that Michael was a dog. (*ETHEL turns upstairs again*) Ethel! I don't want to talk about dogs. Won't ye make friends with me? I want to ask ye something.

ETHEL. (*Goes up to 3rd stair*) We have nothing in common.

PEG. That doesn't prevent us being decent to each other.

ETHEL. (*Pause*) Decent?

PEG. I'll meet ye threequarters of the way if ye'll only show one generous feeling toward me. (*Pause*) Ye would if ye knew what was in my mind.

ETHEL. (*Goes to foot of stairs*) You're a strange creature.

PEG. (*Crossing to R. C.*) You've got us mixed up. I'm not the strange one. *I'm* just what I am. I don't want to be anythin' else. But you, all of ye, are trying to be somethin' different from what ye are.

ETHEL. (*L. of table*) What do you mean?

PEG. (*By armchair R. of table*) I watch ye and listen to ye. Ye turn yer face to the world as much as to say "Aren't I the easy-goin', sweet-tempered, calm young lady?" And ye're not quite that, are ye?

ETHEL. *What am I?* (*Sits L. of table*)

PEG. (*Sits R. of table*) Of course, ye've got the breedin' and the beautiful manners, but up in yer head and down in yer heart you worry your soul all the time. And ye have a temper. And it's a beautiful temper. It's a shame for ye not to let it out in the daylight so that everyone can see it. But ye can't, can ye? Because it's not good form. And with all yer fine advantages ye're not very happy, are ye? (*ETHEL turns her head away and down*) Are ye, dear?

ETHEL. (*Slowly*) No. I'm not.

PEG. Nayther am I in this house. (*Pause*) Couldn't we thry to comfort each other? (*Crosses to ETHEL at table*)

ETHEL. *Comfort?* You?

PEG. Sure, a kindly impulse gives ye a warm feelin' around the heart, so they say. And ye'd have it if ye'd only be a little kind to me.

ETHEL. (*Rises, moved in spite of herself*) I'm afraid I *have* been a little inconsiderate.

PEG. Ye have.

ETHEL. What would you like me to do?

PEG. I'd like ye to spake to me as if I were a human bein', and not a c'od of earth.

ETHEL. Very well, Margaret, I will.

PEG. (c.) Thank ye very much. (ETHEL moves to go. PEG moves up, too) Ethel! I'd like very much to ask ye something else.

ETHEL. (Turning back) What is it? (Comes back to L. of table)

PEG. (Close to ETHEL) Do ye know anything about love?

ETHEL. (Astonished) Love?

PEG. Have ye ever been in love?

ETHEL. (Puts letter slowly behind her back) No.

PEG. Have ye ever thought about it?

ETHEL. Yes.

PEG. (Turns to ETHEL. Eagerly) What do ye think about it?

ETHEL. Rot! (Comes down to front of bench, looks at letter)

PEG. (Following her down) Rot, is it?

ETHEL. (Sits on bench) Sentimental nonsense that exists only in novels.

PEG. (Excitedly) Ye're wrong. It's the most wonderful thing in the world. To love a good man who loves you. A man who made ye hot-and-cold, burnin' like fire one minute, and freezin' like ice the next. Who made yer heart leap with happiness when he came near ye, and ache with sorrow when he went away from ye. Haven't ye ever felt that?

ETHEL. Never.

PEG. Oh! It's mighty disturbin', so it is. (Sits beside ETHEL) One day ye walk on air, and the next yer feet are like lead. One day the world's all beautiful flowers and sweet music and sunshine, and the next day it's all coffins and corpses. (Shaking her head) It's mighty disturbin', so it is

ETHEL. How do you know all this?

PEG. (Hurriedly) I read about it in a great, big book.

ETHEL. When you're a little older you'll think differently. You'll realize it's all very primitive.

PEG. Primitive? ..

ETHEL. Of the earth, earthy.

PEG. (*Suddenly*) Don't you like men?

ETHEL. Not much.

PEG. (*R. end of couch*) Just dogs?

ETHEL. (*L. end of couch*) You can trust them.
(*Caresses Pet*)

PEG. I like dogs, too. But I like children very much better. (*Suddenly*) Wouldn't ye like to have a child of yer own?

ETHEL. (*Horried*) Really, Margaret!

PEG. Well, I would. And that's the woman in us. Ye only fondle that thing—(*Pointing to Pet*)—because ye haven't got a chick to call yer own. All the selfish women have dogs. They're afraid to have children. I like dogs, too. They're all very well in their way, but sure they can't laugh to ye, and cry to ye, and comfort ye, like a baby can. (*Points to Pet*) Ye know, that thing could never be President of the United States. But if ye had a child he might grow up to be President.

ETHEL. That's very Irish.

PEG. It's very human, too. I wish you were a little more Irish. I think we'd get along better, I do.

ETHEL. (*Rises and crosses c.*) It is not customary for girls to talk about such things.

PEG. I know it isn't, and I can't understand why we shouldn't discuss events of national importance. I know it's not customary. We think about them—why can't we talk about them? If there was more honesty in the world there would be less sin.

ETHEL. Please, Margaret. (*Turning*)

PEG. (*Rises and crosses to ETHEL c.*) Now, let us be honest with each other.

ETHEL. What do you mean?

PEG. You like Mr. Brent, don't ye?

ETHEL. (*Instinctively puts letter behind her back*)
Certainly, I do. He's a very old friend of the family.

PEG. He has a wife?

ETHEL. He has.

PEG. He has a baby?

ETHEL. Well——!

PEG. Of course, I've never seen them. He never brings them along with him when he calls on you, but ye'd know he had 'em if ye ever heard Alaric ask after 'em.

ETHEL. What of that?

PEG. Is it customary for English husbands with babies to kiss other women—(*ETHEL turns on her*)
Well, let us say, to kiss other women's hands?

ETHEL. (*Pause. Checks her anger*) It is a very old and very respected custom.

PEG. Devil doubt it but it's *old*. I'm not so sure about the respect. Why doesn't he kiss my aunt when he comes to this house?

ETHEL. Oh! You don't understand. (*Crosses to foot of stairs*)

PEG. I know I don't, but I'm trying to.

ETHEL. (*At foot of stairs*) I suppose it is too much to expect that a child of the common people should understand the customs of *decent* people.

PEG. Why should the *common people* have all the decency and why should the aristocracy have *none* of the decency. (*ETHEL goes to stairs and up two steps. PEG, at foot of stairs, looks at her*)
Don't get mad. I didn't mean it. I've heard my father say that in one of his speeches, and it came to my tongue first thing.

ETHEL. (*Up 3rd stair, indignantly*) Oh! Be good enough never to speak to me again as long as you're in this house. (*Enter JARVIS*) If I had my

way you'd leave it this moment. As it is—as it is—
(Looks at letter. PEG to front of table. JARVIS L., shows in JERRY, who is in evening-dress, light summer overcoat, and Homburg hat. ETHEL shakes hands with JERRY) How do you do? Excuse me just a moment. Wait, Jarvis. *(Goes to writing-desk, tears envelope opens, adds a postscript, addresses another envelope, and seals it. The moment JERRY enters PEG's face lights up. She gives him her hand)*

JERRY. Well, and how is Miss Peg?

PEG. Oh! I'm fine, Mr. Jerry. How are you? Let me take yer hat and coat.

JERRY. No, thank you. I'm not going to stay.

PEG. *(c., disappointedly)* Ye're not?

JERRY. *(c.)* Is your aunt in?

PEG. Yes. Are you calling on her?

JERRY. Yes.

ETHEL. *(Rises, hands letter to JARVIS)* Send that, please.

(Exit JARVIS.)

JERRY. *(c., bringing ETHEL into the scene)* I've come to ask your mother if she would let you both come to a dance to-night across at the Assembly Rooms.

ETHEL. I'm sorry. I can't go. I have a headache. *(Turns and crosses L. to door)*

JERRY. *(L. c.)* What a pity! Do you suppose your mother would allow Miss Margaret to go?

ETHEL. *(Stops and turns)* I'll ask her. *(Goes to door L.)*

PEG. *(Impulsively runs to her. In undertone)* I didn't mean to hurt ye—*(ETHEL goes out L. PEG comes back ruefully and sits on couch, after which JERRY puts hat and coat on chair L. of table)*

JERRY. *(c.)* What's the matter?

PEG. (*Sits back of couch*) I tell you, one of us girls has been brought up all wrong. I tried to make friends with her, but only made her hopping-mad, as I make everybody else in this house. The minute I open my mouth away they go.

JERRY. Arn't you friends?

PEG. No. We're not. None of them are with me.

JERRY. What a shame!

PEG. Wait until ye hear me aunt when ye ask her about the dance.

JERRY. Don't you think she will let you go?

PEG. No. I know she won't let me go. I know that. The question is—are we going? (*Determinedly, rises and goes to him*) I want to go to that dance, Jerry.

JERRY. Why, Peg—

PEG. (L.) I do want to go to that dance. I'm crazy mad to go to that dance.

(*JERRY shakes his head.*)

JERRY. We'll ask your aunt.

PEG. I know we will. We'll ask her to-morrow.

JERRY. No. We'll ask her to-night.

PEG. Don't let's take any chances. I do want to go to that dance, Jerry.

JERRY. No, Peg, no.

PEG. Well, if you think I'm going to let a dance get by me you're very much mistaken. When the lights are all out and they're all asleep I'll creep down the stairs and meet you at the foot of the path. And if it goes against your tender conscience to take me—I'll take you—and that's how we'll settle that.

JERRY. (c. *Laughing*) But there may not be any occasion to do any such wild, foolish thing. Your aunt may be delighted.

PEG. My aunt doesn't know how to spell that.

JERRY. (*Sits on table c., looking at books*) Are these your books? How are your studies progressing?

PEG. The way they always have. They're standing still. I can't see the sense of learnin' the heights of a lot of mountains I'm never goin' to climb. And I want to tell you, I'm surprised at my aunt allowing me to read about the doings of those dead kings. I think Charles II was a devil.

JERRY. They made history.

PEG. Did they? Well, they ought to have been ashamed of themselves. I don't care how high Mont Blanc is, and I don't care when William the Conqueror landed in England.

JERRY. Oh, nonsense——

PEG. And I tell ye, I hate yer English history—— it makes all my Irish blood boil, so it does. "What is England? Do you know what it is? It's a bit of a cuntry that's tramplin' down a fine race like ours." That's what my father says, and that's how my father says it, with his fist, and nobody ever contradicts him either.

(JERRY *laughs.*)

JERRY. Is it fair to your aunt?

PEG. (*Sullenly*) I don't know.

JERRY. Is it fair to yourself?

PEG. That sounds like my aunt, that does.

JERRY. You'll be at such a disadvantage by-and-by with other girls with half your intelligence just because they know the things you refuse to learn. Then you'll be ashamed.

PEG. Are *you* ashamed of me?

JERRY. Not a bit.

PEG. You're not ashamed of me, are ye?

JERRY. Of course not.

PEG. Then everything's all right then. What's the matter? (*Goes to piano and sits on stool*)

JERRY. I was just the same at your age. (*Crosses to armchair R.*) I used to scamp at school and shirk at college until I found myself so far behind fellows I despised that I was ashamed. Then I went after them tooth and nail until I caught them up and passed them. (*Kneels on chair R. C.*)

PEG. (*Eagerly*) Did ye now?

JERRY. I did.

PEG. I am going to do that, too.

JERRY. Will you?

PEG. (*Nods vigorously*) From now on I'm going to learn everything they teach me, if it kills me

JERRY. I wish you would.

PEG. And after I know more than anybody else in all the world ever knew are you going to be very proud of me? (*Wistfully*)

JERRY. (*Kneeling on armchair R.*) Very. Even more than I am now.

PEG. Are ye proud of me now?

JERRY. Yes, Peg, proud to think you're my friend.

PEG. Faith, that's not news. I know very well that we're friends.

JERRY. I am *yours*.

PEG. Sure, I guess I'm you yours all right. (*Looks at him, laughs shyly, presses her cheeks*) Did ye ever hear what Tom Moore wrote about friendship?

JERRY. No.

PEG. (*Excitedly*) Would ye like to hear what Tom Moore wrote about friendship?

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. See if anybody's comin'. (*JERRY crosses to stairs and listens. PEG starts playing*)

JERRY. (*Crosses to armchair R. c.*) Oho! So you play?

PEG. (*Nods, laughing*) A little bit. My father taught me. But my aunt can't bear it. Do you know what the teacher here told me? She said I should do this—(*Plays scale*)—for two years. I should do that before I played a tune. I told her I played by ear. She said I had no ear.

JERRY. (*Looking at her ears*) I think they're very pretty.

PEG. Do ye?

JERRY. I do.

PEG. Well, you watch them, and then you won't mind my singin'. Come on over in Jarvis' high-chair. (*JERRY crosses to chair below piano. PEG smiles up at him*) About a girl, this is, who built a shrine. And she thought the best thing in the world to put in it was an image of "*Friendship*".

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. Yes. You see she was like you. She thought there was nothing in the world as nice as friendship.

JERRY. Yes.

PEG. Yes. And this is what happened to her. (*Laughs a little elfish laugh, and then croons softly*)

"She flew to a sculptor, who set down before her
A "*Friendship*," the fairest his art could invent.

But so cold and so dull that this Youthful adorer
Saw plainly that was not the *Friendship* she
meant.

(*Sings.*)

" 'Oh, never,' she cried, " could I think of enshrining

An image whose looks are so joyless and dim,

But yon little Cupid—(*Points to Cupid*)

—midst roses reclining,

We'll make, if you please, sir, a Friendship of him."

A Friendship of Cupid. (JERRY looks at the statue. PEG nods, smiling, and excitedly sings)

" 'Farewell,' said the sculptor, 'Sure, you're not the first maiden

Who came but for Friendship and took away—
(Pause)

Love."

(Her voice dies away to a whisper)

JERRY. (Amazed) Where in the world did you learn that?

PEG. My father taught me that. Tom Moore's my father's prayer-book.

JERRY. (Rises and crosses c.) "Who came but for Friendship and took away Love."

PEG. (On piano-stool) Isn't that beautiful?

JERRY. Is there anything better than friendship between man and woman?

PEG. Of course there is. (Crosses R. c., nods, goes to him) My father felt it toward my mother or I wouldn't be here now.

JERRY. Could you ever feel it, Peg?

(PEG nods.)

PEG. I wish I'd studied—I'd be more worthy of—(Crosses L. c., suddenly breaking off. JERRY, c., turns to her. PEG covering up what is in her mind and on her tongue) I'm just an Irish nothing.

JERRY. Don't say that.

PEG. Yet I'm sure there is something good in me, but the bad little something always beats the good little something out, so it does.

JERRY. What you call the bad in you is just the cry of youth that resents being curbed, and the

good in you is the woman struggling for an outlet.

PEG. Will you help me to give it an outlet, Mr. Jerry?

JERRY. Yes. In every way in my power.

PEG. (*Roguishly*) Well, would ye mind very much if the bad little something had just one more spurt before I killed it altogether.

JERRY. What do you mean?

PEG. I want to go to the dance. It's the last bad thing I'll ask you to let me do. I'll behave like a Saint from Heaven after that. I'll die happy if I can waltz once around the floor with you. (*Pleading. Dances up to him, and waltzes round him to R. Enter L. MRS. CHICHESTER, who looks at PEG in horrified amazement*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh! What does this mean? (L. C.)

JERRY. (*Crossing to Mrs. CHICHESTER*) I want you to do something that will make the child very happy. Will you allow her to go to a dance at the Assembly Rooms to-night?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Certainly not. I'm surprised at your asking such a thing.

PEG. (*Sits armchair R. C.*) I could have told you that backwards.

JERRY. (*Straightening up*) I asked Ethel as well, but she can't go, as she's got a headache. I thought you might be pleased at giving your niece a little pleasure.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Go to a dance? Unchaperoned?

JERRY. My mother and sisters will be there.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crossing him to C.*) A child of her age!

PEG. (*Vehemently*) A child of my age! My father lets me go any place I want to ever since I was six. Ye can't raise the Irish on a lot of books.

It's never been done. They'll die on yer hands, they will. I'm crazy mad to go to that dance.

MRS. CHICHESTER. No, Margaret.

PEG. I'll study my head off in the morning if ye'll let me dance my feet off a little bit to-night.

MRS. CHICHESTER. No.

PEG. (*Pleadingly*) I ask ye on my bended knees,—Please let me go to the dance.

MRS. CHICHESTER. No, Margaret. No.

PEG. All right. I give ye fair warning, I'm going to the dance.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*To JERRY*) It was very good of you to trouble to come over. Forgive me if I seem ungracious, but it's quite out of the question.

(*PEG winks at JERRY behind MRS. CHICHESTER'S back, and rises.*)

JERRY. (*Gets hat and coat from chair L. of table*) I'm sorry. (*Shakes hands with MRS. CHICHESTER*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (c.) Kindly remember me to your mother and sisters.

JERRY. With pleasure. Good-night! (*Goes to door L.*)

PEG. Good-night, Mr. Jerry. (*Pantomimes JERRY that she will be down to meet him and go to the dance after they're all in bed. MRS. CHICHESTER looking round and seeing her making signs, PEG pretends to be catching a fly. Exit JERRY*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (L.) What do you mean by twirling around in that disgraceful way? Are you ever going to learn how to behave?

PEG. (c.) Yes, aunt. I'm never going to annoy you after to-night. I'm going to work very hard, too,—after to-night. Don't ye see what a disadvantage I'd be at with other girls of half my age and

half my intelligence. I'm going after them tooth and nail, and I'll catch them up and pass them, and then he'll be proud of me, he will.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

PEG. Ye'll be proud of me, I said, ye will.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What is all this?

PEG. It's what I'm going to do—*after to-night*.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Well, I'm very glad to hear it.

PEG. I knew ye would be. And I'll never be any trouble to ye—*after to-night*.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I hope you will be of the same opinion in the morning.

PEG. I hope so, too. D'ye mind very much if I sit up for an hour—

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

PEG. Study, I mean.

(MRS. CHICHESTER *crosses to piano*.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Study just one hour. That will be very nice.

(PEG *goes to back of table, sits, and opens atlas*.)

PEG. Are you going to bed now?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Yes.

PEG. Everybody in the house going to bed now?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Yes. Everybody. (*Shuts piano, goes up and closes windows, turns off hall lamp*)

PEG. That's good. (*Sings song*)

“Man, dear, I remember when coming home the rain began.

I wrapped my frieze coat round her, and devil a waistcoat had I on.

My shirt was rather fine-drawn, but, oh, the false and cruel one.

For all o' that she's gone and left me here for to die.”

MRS. CHICHESTER. Where on earth did you hear a song like that?

PEG. That's a fine song, that is. That's my father's best song. An Irish song, that is.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I should think it was.
(Closes curtains)

PEG. It has twenty-two verses.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Comes down L. of PEG)
Has it, indeed?

PEG. Yes. I know them all, too. (Sings again)

"Man, dear, and did ye never hear of pretty Molly Brannigan?

Faith, and she has left me, and I'll never be a man again.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Now, now! Don't make any noise.

PEG. That's not a noise. That's my best singing. That's very discouraging to a young singer.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Good-night, Margaret. And, oh, if only you would keep your hair out of your eyes.

PEG. Well, why don't you let me wear one of your fishnets? (MRS. CHICHESTER goes upstairs saying "Fishnets!" PEG calling) Oh, Aunt!

MRS. CHICHESTER. Yes?

PEG. Do you remember I said I had to be getting back home? Well, I've changed my mind. I'd like to stay here another month, please.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (Top of stairs) Well, we'll talk it over with Mr. Hawkes in the morning.

(Warning.)

PEG. Yes, Aunt.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Good-night, Margaret.

PEG. God bless you. (Exit MRS. CHICHESTER.
Business. Sings)

"The left side of my carcass is as weak as water-gruel, man.
 There's not a pick upon my bones since Molly's proved so cruel, man.
 And if I had a blunder-gun I'd go and fight a duel, man.
 'Tis better I should shoot myself than live here to die."

(Or)

"The place where my heart was you could easy roll a turnip in.
 'Tis as wide as old Dublin, and from Dublin to the Devil's Glyn.
 If she wished to take another, sure, she might have left mine back again,
 And not have gone and left me here alone for to die."

(ETHEL enters, goes upstairs, and exits without a word as PEG sings.)

"I'm cool and determined as any Alexander man
 Will ye come to my wake when I go the long meander, man?"

Hello, Ethel! (*Mimics* ETHEL) "How do ye do, Margaret?" "Im' studying for an hour." (*Turning leaves of atlas*) "I'm trying to find England." (*Pause*) "Good night, Ethel." "Good night, Margaret, dear." "Sleep tight, Ethel." "Oh, that's all right, Margaret." "Don't mention it, Ethel." (*Mimics* ALARIC) "What's the population of Turkey? Ye little devil! Study all the pretty maps. Model yourself on Ethel. Sit down like Ethel." (*Noise with mouth. Goes up c. and pulls curtains open. Clock strikes nine*) I wonder if he's coming back. (*Comes down and sits chair R. of*

table. Mimics MRS. CHICHESTER and JERRY) "Go to a dance unchaperoned? Oh, no. Not unchaperoned." "My mother and sisters will be there. Eh, what? What, what?" "Go to a dance? A child of her age? Margaret, I'm surprised. No, sir. No dance. Not until she's—eighty."

Curtain falls for about ten seconds

(As soon as curtain is down start music under stage)

Curtain

(Curtain rises Dance music "Valse Mauve" heard faintly in the distance. JERRY enters through opening R. U. E., goes to stairs, listens, then goes back to R. U. E.)

JERRY It's all right. *(PEG enters, goes to stairs, listens, then comes to JERRY, who has gone to piano and put down his hat)*

PEG. Oh, I'm so happy! So happy! The whole world's goin' round in one grand waltz, and it's all been through you, Mr. Jerry. *(Dances to the distant music)*

JERRY. *(Up R. c.)* I'm glad it's been through me, Peg.

PEG. I don't see why it can't all be like this. Why can't we laugh and dance our way through it all?

JERRY I wish I could make the world one great ballroom for you.

PEG. And no creepin' back like a thief in the night!

JERRY. No—your own mistress, free to do whatever you wish.

PEG. *(Suddenly, with a little elfish laugh)* Yet, you know, half the fun to-night has been that while I'm supposed to be sleepin' upstairs I've been at

the dance stealin' time. Do ye know "the best of all ways to lengthen your days?"

JERRY. No.

PEG. "It's to steal a few hours from the night, my dear."

JERRY. (*By piano*) Well, you've stolen them.

PEG. I'm a thief, I am.

JERRY. No. You're the sweetest, dearest—
(*Bends over her, checks himself, goes to piano for hat*) I think you'd better go to bed now.

PEG. I know that. But what were ye goin' to say to me?

JERRY. Something it would be better to say in daylight.

PEG. But why in the daylight, with the beautiful bright moon so high in the heavens?

JERRY. Go now. Someone may hear us.

PEG. I'll not sleep a wink thinkin' of all the wonderful things that have happened this night. Must I go?

JERRY. You must.

PEG. With the music coming in across the lawn?

JERRY. Someone might come.

PEG. And the moon so high in the heavens?

JERRY. I don't want to cause you any trouble.

PEG. That's a grand moon, so it is.

JERRY. Go, Peg, go.

PEG. (*Crosses over to L. by post*) All right. I suppose you do know best, but that's a magnificent moon. Good-night, Mr. Jerry.

(*Stop music*)

JERRY. Good-night, Peg. (*Kisses her hand. She gives a little sigh and looks at her hand. Foot-steps are heard in the garden. At opening R.*) Take care! Someone is coming. (*Goes out. PEG sits on stairs, hiding behind newel post. BRENT appears outside opening R.*) Hello, Brent!

BRENT. Why, what in the world——?

JERRY. Ssh! The house is asleep.

BRENT. So I see.

JERRY. Just coming from the dance? I didn't see you there.

BRENT. No. I was restless, and just strolled here.

JERRY. (*Takes BRENT's arm*) Shall we go along to the road together?

BRENT. Right——

JERRY. *Strolled* here? Why, you've got your car.

BRENT. Car? Yes. It's a bright night for a spin.
(*They disappear*)

(*PEG remains in the same position till they are out of hearing, then she creeps up the stairs. At the top she starts back, and ETHEL appears, fully dressed, carrying a small dressing-bag. ETHEL waits to come down till PEG is nearly at the top of the stairs.*)

PEG. Ethel!

ETHEL. (*At head of stairs. In guarded tones*) Go down into the room. (*PEG goes downstairs to c., ETHEL following her to L. front of table*)

PEG. (*R. front of table*) Ye won't tell your mother, will ye? She'd send me away, and I don't want to go away now. I've been to the dance.

ETHEL. To the dance?

PEG. Yes. Mr. Jerry took me.

ETHEL. Jerry?

PEG. Yes. Ye won't tell your mother, will ye?
(*Backing to c.*)

ETHEL. (*Following*) I most certainly shall see that my mother knows it.

PEG. You will?

ETHEL. I will. You had no right to go.

PEG. Why are you so hard on me, Ethel?

ETHEL. (*Crossing R. and up R.*) Because I detest you.

PEG. I'm sorry. Ye've spoilt all my pleasure now, so you have. (*Starts to stairs and goes slowly up. Stops, think, looks at ETHEL*) Wait a minute! What are you doin' yourself with your hat and coat on at this time of night? (*Coming back L. c.*)

ETHEL. (*R., turning to PEG*) Go to your room!

PEG. (*L. c.*) Were you goin' away?

ETHEL. (*C.*) Keep your voice down.

PEG. *He* was here a minute ago—Jerry took him away.

ETHEL. Who was here?

PEG. Mr. Brent was here. (*ETHEL starts. PEG grips her wrist*) Were ye goin' away with him? Were ye?

ETHEL. Take your hands off me.

PEG. Were ye? Answer me.

ETHEL. Yes. And I *am*.

PEG. (*Turns ETHEL round to L. c.*) No, ye're not.

ETHEL. Let me go.

PEG. Ye're not going out of this house to-night if I have to wake everyone in it.

ETHEL. (*c., front of table*) Wake them! They can't stop me. Nothing can stop me now. I'm sick of this living on charity, sick of meeting you every day—an implied insult in your every tone and look, as much as to say, "I'm giving you your daily bread, I'm keeping the roof over you." I'm sick of it, and I end it to-night. Let me go, or I'll—I'll—(*Starts*)

PEG. What d'ye mean, I'm keepin' the roof over ye, I'm givin' ye yer daily bread? What are ye ravin' about?

ETHEL. I'm at the end to-night. I'm going—(*Struggles with PEG*)

PEG. And what d'ye suppose ye'd be agoin' to? A wakin' and sleepin' heil, sure!

ETHEL. *I'm going.*

PEG. Ye'd take him from his wife and her baby?

ETHEL. He hates them, and I hate *this*. And I'm going——

PEG. So ye'd break yer mother's heart and his wife's just to satisfy yer own selfish pleasures? Well, I'm glad I sinned to-night in doin' what I wanted to do, since it's given me the chance to save *you* from doin' the most shameful thing a woman ever did.

ETHEL. (*Turns*) Will you——?

PEG. Ye'll stay here if I have to wake up the whole world.

ETHEL. (*c., frightenedly*) No, no, you mustn't do that!

PEG. Ye just told me yer own mother couldn't stop ye.

ETHEL. She mustn't know! She mustn't know! (*Sobs*) Let me go. He's waiting. (*Moves forward*)

PEG. You let him wait. He gave his name and his life to a woman, and it's your duty to protect her and the child she brought him.

ETHEL. (*c.*) I'd kill myself first.

PEG. (*R. c.*) Not first. That's what would happen to ye after ye'd gone with him. He'd lave ye in an hour to sorrow alone. Doesn't he want to leave the woman he swore to cherish at the altar of God? What do we suppose he'd do to one he took no oath with at all? You have some sense about this. And I want to tell ye it's no compliment the man's payin' ye either. Faith, he'd have made love to me if I'd let him.

ETHEL. (*Turns to PEG slowly*) What? To you?

PEG. If ye hadn't come in when ye did to-day I'd have taught him a lesson he'd have carried to his grave, so I would.

ETHEL. (*Crossing to PEG*) He tried to make love to you?

PEG. (R. C.) A dozen times since I've been in yer house. And to-day he walked toward me with his arms outstretched, saying, "Come. Let's kiss and be friends," and in you came.

ETHEL. (*Coming forward R.*) Is that true?

PEG. On my poor mother's memory that's true, so it is.

ETHEL. Oh! The wretch! The wretch! (*Sinks in chair R. of table, drops bag*)

PEG. That's what he is. And ye'd give yer life into his keepin' to blacken so that no decent man or woman would ever look at ye again.

ETHEL. No. That's over. It's over. I hate myself. Oh, how I hate myself! (*Crying and sobbing*)

PEG. (*In a moment all pity*) Ethel! Acush'a! Don't cry. Don't do that. Don't. Don't ye know he's not worth it? Don't ye know ye've got to kape yer life and yer heart clean till the one man in all the world comes to ye, and then ye'll know what real happiness means. Don't cry, dear. (*ETHEL buries her face in her hands to deaden the sobs. PEG beside her, comforting her. ETHEL still crying*) Well, then, cry. And may the salt of yer tears wash away the sins of this night and fall like holy water on yer soul! And with the sunlight the thought of all this will go from ye. Come to my room and I'll sit by yer side till morning. (*PEG helps her up. ETHEL, on the verge of fainting, picks up bag. her body trembling with suppressed sobs, totters. PEG walks her across to staircase L.*) I don't know at all how you could think of going away with a married man, Ethel.

ETHEL. (*Cries*) Oh, Margaret!

PEG. Ssh, dear! You'll wake yer mother up.

Not a sound! Not a sound now! We'll talk when we get upstairs. Aisy now! (*Both creep up the stairs. When they are almost at the top PEG slips and rolls all the way to the bottom, knocking over a brass jardiniere at the top of the stairs, which rolls all the way down. PEG rises, runs across to R. corner. ETHEL follows her. PEG listens*)

PEG. Holy Mary!

ETHEL. What shall we do? What shall we do?

PEG. Well, that's all I'm going to do, I tell you. If that doesn't wake them up they're sleeping the sleep of the dead.

(*Voices off L.*)

ALARIC. (*Off L.*) Hello, Mater! Did you hear it, too? Etc.—

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Off L.*) Oh, Alaric! A most fearful crash! Etc.—

ETHEL. Oh, what shall we do, Margaret? What shall we do?

PEG. Give me your hat and coat, and sit in that chair. (*Takes off her cap and cloak and puts on ETHEL's hat and coat*) I'll do all the talking, though what the devil I'll say I don't know. Don't you say a word. Your mother mustn't know you were going out of the house with that man. It would break her heart. Where's your bag? (*Takes bag quickly from ETHEL. Door L. opens and JARVIS enters. MRS. CHICHESTER and ALARIC coming down the stairs with candles, MRS. CHICHESTER in wrapper, ALARIC in dressing-gown*)

ALARIC. It's all right, Mater. Don't be frightened. I'm not a bit timid. Thank God you've got a man in the house.

JARVIS. Who's there? (*ALARIC moves carefully L., collides with JARVIS, and takes him by the throat*)

ALARIC. Ah! I've got you?

JARVIS. It's only me, sir.

ALARIC. Oh, get out of the way Jarvis. (JARVIS exits L. ALARIC moves slowly c., flashing his light all over the room) Now then, come out! Where are you? (Sees the two girls) Ethel!

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret!

ALARIC. Well! I mean to say! What I want to know is—(Switches on lights. ETHEL is discovered very white and tear-stained in the chair, PEG standing beside her, wearing ETHEL'S coat and hat and carrying her hand-bag in her right hand) What are you two girls playing at?

MRS. CHICHESTER (To PEG) What does this mean?

PEG. Sure, I was going out, and when I came in Ethel said to me—

MRS. CHICHESTER Where were you going?

PEG. I was going out, and—when I came in—Ethel said to me—

MRS. CHICHESTER. Where were you going?

PEG. I was going out, I said, and—Ethel came in—

MRS. CHICHESTER. Why, that's Ethel's cloak.

PEG. I got her hat on, too. And I've got her bag. (Trying to distract MRS. CHICHESTER'S attention from ETHEL, who is half-fainting, puts bag on corner of table)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Her bag! Ethel's bag! (Opens bag, takes out wash-leather bag) Her jewel-bag!

PEG. Jewel-bag!

MRS. CHICHESTER. Where did you get this?

PEG. I took them.

MRS. CHICHESTER. You took them?

PEG. Yes. I took them.

MRS. CHICHESTER. You were *stealing* them?

PEG. No. I wasn't stealing them. I took 'em.

MRS. CHICHESTER. *Why* did you take them?

PEG. I wanted to wear them.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (c.) *Wear* them?

PEG. I always had an idea I should like to wear Ethel's jewels and her hat and coat.

MRS. CHICHESTER. At th's time of night?

PEG. (R. c. *Jumping at the explanation*) I went to the dance. I did.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (L. c.) *What* dance?

PEG. (R. c.) I went to the dance with Mr. Jerry, and I thought it would be a good chance to wear Ethel's jewels and her hat and coat. So I put on her hat and coat, and I wore her jewels, and I went to the dance, and when I came back I made a noise, and Ethel heard me. She put on some clothes and came downstairs and said, "Where have you been?" I said, "I've been to the dance with Mr. Jerry." She said, "You'd better go to bed," and I said, "All right," and I started up the stairs, and some noisy thing came all the way down and forninst me.

ALARIC. (*Crosses back of table to arch R.*) There's someone prowling in the garden.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, Alaric! (*Puts back jewel-bag and closes hand-bag*)

ALARIC. He's on the path.

ETHEL. (*Rises, but sits again as PEG soothes her*) Mr. Brent!

ALARIC. He's coming here. Don't be frightened, Mater. I'll deal with him. (*ETHEL straightens up, here eyes distended. PEG grips her hand to quiet her*) Now, then! What do you want here? Good Lord! Jerry!

(*Music Valse Mauve begins again very faint in the distance. Enter JERRY.*)

JERRY. (*Comes down R.*) I saw your lights go up and I ran back. I guessed something like this

had happened. Don't be hard on your niece. The whole thing was entirely my fault. I asked her to go.

MRS. CHICHESTER. You took my niece to a dance in spite of my absolute refusal to allow her to go?

PEG. He had nothing to do with it all. I took him to the dance, I did. I took him.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Surely Sir Gerald Adair knows better than to take a girl of eighteen to a public ball without the sanction of her relatives?

(JERRY crosses into c.)

PEG. (R.) Sir Gerald? (To JERRY) So you have a title, have yez?

JERRY. (R. c.) Yes, Peg.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Now I hope you realize what you've done.

PEG. I am just beginning to realize what I've done, so I am.

MRS. CHICHESTER. You've disgraced us all.

PEG. (*Fiercely*) Have I?

MRS. CHICHESTER. I'm ashamed of you.

PEG. Are you? Well, I'm going back to my father, who's never ashamed of me. Everything I do is right because I do it. I've disgraced you, have I? There's not one of you in this house will tell the truth to me—(To JERRY)—and I'm going back to my father.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Well, go back to your father.

PEG. (*Starts forward angrily to MRS. CHICHESTER*) I've never been mad about your house.

(*Warning.*)

ETHEL. (*Hysterically. Rising from chair*) No, no! Wait! Don't go. Mother, we are not treating her fairly. You found her here to-night because—

because—(*Faints in chair. General movement. PEG bends over her*)

PEG. She's fainted. Get some water and some smelling-salts. (*JERRY exit L. for water*)

ALARIC. (*Runs upstairs*) Smelling-salts.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Comes running over to chair*) Ethel?

PEG. (*Hysterically*) That's all right. What help can you be to her now that she's fainted, I'd like to know. You don't know how to raise her. You don't know one thought in your daughter's mind. You don't know who she sees or who she goes with. Why don't you try to find out something about your own child once in a while? A lot you know about motherhood! My father knows more about motherhood than any man in the world.

(*First curtain.*)

(*JERRY comes in L. with water, hands it to MRS. CHICHESTER, ALARIC comes downstairs with smelling-salts and over to R. Second curtain. Act plays fifty-three minutes.*)

ACT III

SCENE: *Same as ACT I. N. B. Same flowers as in ACT II, a few fallen leaves on table and floor (on writing desk wild flowers).*

TIME: *Next morning.*

DISCOVERED: ALARIC *sitting on window-seat up at back reading a newspaper.*

(*Enter MRS. CHICHESTER, pale and weary, from up-stairs L.*)

ALARIC. *Jumps up, puts down paper, meets MRS. CHICHESTER at foot of stairs*) Mornin', Mater. (*Kisses her on forehead*) How are you feelin'?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crossing him to table L.*) I didn't close my eyes all night.

ALARIC. (*L. c.*) Isn't that rotten? I was a bit plungy myself. You know—first one side and then the other. (*Yawns*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Sits*) What is to be done?

ALARIC. (*L. c. stretching his arms*) Get in forty winks during the day, I suppose.

MRS. CHICHESTER. I mean about Margaret.

ALARIC. Oh! The little devil. (*Crosses and sits on couch L.*) Nothin' that I can see. She's got it into her stubborn little head that she means to leave us, and that's the end of it.

MRS. CHICHESTER. And the end of our income.

ALARIC. Well, you were a bit rough on her, Mater. Now I come to think, we've all been a bit rough on her, except me. I did make her laugh once or twice. Poor little soul! After all, suppose

she did want to dance. What's the use of fussing? Let her, I say. Let her dance. Let her dance.

MRS. CHICHESTER. A child of her age?

ALARIC. Child! Why, in America they're grown women with families at her age.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Thank Heaven they're not in England.

ALARIC. No. But they will be, Mater. They're kickin' over the traces every day. One time they kept to the pavement. Now they're out in the middle of the road, and in thousands. What ho!

MRS. CHICHESTER. Yes. That's true.

ALARIC. Bless me, yes. I know it's true. I've met 'em. And some of 'em were *rippers*. Why, there's one little woman I know—well, when I say little—she's—she's—you might say magnificent—

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, Alaric—

ALARIC. Well, perhaps you're right.

MRS. CHICHESTER. And just when I had begun to have some hope of her.

ALARIC. Who?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Why, Margaret.

ALARIC. Oh! The imp. (*Rises and goes up L. to back of table c.*) Well, I never did. Not a hope. I've always felt she ought to have the inscription on dear old Shakespeare's grave waving in front of her all the time. How does it go? You know, Mater. "Good friend, for goodness sake forbear."

MRS. CHICHESTER. But under *our* influence—in time—

ALARIC. No, no Mater. Peg will always be a Peter Pan. (*Crosses around table to R.*) She'll never grow up. She'd play elfish tricks if she had a nursery full of infants.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Some good man, some day, might change that.

ALARIC. Ah! But where is he? No. Back she goes to-day, and off I go to-morrow to work.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, Alaric.

ALARIC. Must hold the roof up, Mater, and pacify the tradesmen. (*Sits R. on table*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*With a sudden thought*) Alaric!

ALARIC. Yes?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Do you *like* her?

ALARIC. Oh, here and there. She amuses me like anything at times. She drew a map of Europe the other day that was the most fearful and wonderful thing I ever saw. Looked like some marvellous sin. Mostly Ireland.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Rising*) Oh, my boy!

ALARIC. What is it? (*Rises*) You're not going to cry?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*L. c., weeps*) Oh, if you only could!

ALARIC. *Could? What?*

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*c.*) Take that little wayward child into your life and mould her.

ALARIC. Me?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Yes.

ALARIC. (*c.*) No, Mater. I can do most things, but as a "Moulder" oh, no. Let Ethel do it. (*Moves away down R.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Following him down R.*) I mean to take her really into your life—to have and to hold!

ALARIC. I don't want to hold her.

MRS. CHICHESTER. It would be the *saving* of her.

ALARIC. That's all very well, but what about me?

MRS. CHICHESTER. It would be the saving of us.

ALARIC. How would my holding and moulding her save us?

MRS. CHICHESTER. She'd stay with us if you were engaged.

ALARIC. Engaged! Don't, Mother, please. (*Sits armchair R., shivers*) Good Lord! Engaged to that tomboy!

MRS. CHICHESTER. (R. C.) She has the blood of the Kingsnorths.

ALARIC. Pretty well covered up in O'Connell—Irish.

MRS. CHICHESTER. She has the breeding of my sister, Angela.

ALARIC. (*In armchair R.*) Well, you wouldn't think it to watch her.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (R. C.) And she'll have five thousand a year when she's twenty-one.

ALARIC. (*Whistles—business. Rises and looks at Mrs. Chichester*) Five thousand of the very best, eh?

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Embraces him*) Oh, my boy!

ALARIC. Wait a minute. One can't burn all one's boats.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Think what it means. Your family preserved, and a brand snatched from the burning.

ALARIC. Ah! That's just it! (*Crossing into L. c.*) I cannot see myself as a brand-snatcher. Besides, there's that little girl wild about me, and I don't dislike her at all, and I've half-promised—

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crossing to him*) It would unite our blood.

ALARIC. Oh, hang our blood.

MRS. CHICHESTER. It would settle you for life.

ALARIC. (L. C.) Yes. It certainly would.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Think what it would mean.

ALARIC. I am. I'm thinking really awfully hard. (*She moves to him*) Just a minute! Give me a chance, Mater. (*Reasoning*) Of course she's not half bad lookin', here and there. (*Mildly enthusiastic, sits on bench L.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. At times she's beautiful.

ALARIC. (*Depressed*) She has a shockin' temper.

MRS. CHICHESTER. That would soften under the restraining hand of affection.

(ALARIC, *shaking his head, turns to* MRS. CHICHESTER.)

ALARIC. She'd have to dress her hair and drop that dog. I will *not* have that dog all over the place. In that I would be obeyed.

MRS. CHICHESTER. The woman who loves always obeys.

ALARIC. Ah! There we have it. *Does* she love me?

MRS. CHICHESTER. How could she be near you for the last month and not love you? (*Crossing to him, embracing him*)

ALARIC. Of course there *is* that. (*Thinks*) Well, as you say, if she loves me—and for your sake, Mother,—and for darling Ethel's sake—and for me—*well*, anyway, it's a go! I'll do it. (*Crosses to c., straightens up.* MRS. CHICHESTER *turns to him*) It'll take a bit of doin' but I'll do it.

(*Enter* PEG *from stairs. She, too, is pale and worried, her eyes sleepless. When she sees* MRS. CHICHESTER *she stops at bottom of stairs.*)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Good-morning, Margaret!

PEG. Good-mornin', Ant.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Now, Alaric. (*Puts his tie straight, then exit* L.)

(PEG *looks quickly at* ALARIC, *who is nervously arguing with himself, his back to her. She hurries to* R. *corner, turns piano-cover up, and takes*

out book. ALARIC turns and sees her. She puts book under her arm.)

ALARIC. (c.) Hello! What have we got there all tucked away?

PEG. (*Holding it up*) The only thing I'm takin' away that I didn't bring with me.

ALARIC. Oh! A book?

PEG. Shure, you're a very good guesser when you see a thing. That's what it is, a book.

ALARIC. You're takin' it away?

PEG. That's what I said, I'm takin' it away. (*Crossing behind table to stairs*)

ALARIC. (*Following PEG*) You're not really goin' to leave us, Cousin?

PEG. I am, Cousin. And ye can forget the relationship the minit the cab drives away from yer door, Cousin. (*Goes to stairs, stops on third step*)

ALARIC. (*Runs upstairs above her*) Wait a minute. There's something I want to tell you. Do you know, I've grown really—(*He swallows*) awfully fond of you.

PEG. It nearly choked ye, didn't it?

ALARIC. Awfully fond of you. Sit down. (*PEG goes to sit on stairs*) Not there. Over there. Someone may hear us.

PEG. (*Sitting on chair below stairs, looking at him with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes*) When did ye find out ye were fond of me, Alaric?

ALARIC. Just now. Over there. No, over there. When the thought flashed through me that perhaps you really meant to leave us. The idea bruises me—

PEG. Does it?

ALARIC. —positively bruises!

PEG. You'll get over that.

ALARIC. I don't think I will. (*With a supreme effort*) You know, meeting a girl like you day after

day for a month has an awful effect on a fellow.

PEG. Awful effect?

ALARIC. Awful! Not to see you running up and downstairs, lying about the place, studying all those jolly maps and things, it hurts, really hurts. (*Comes down to her*) Do you know, I'm goin' to do something I've never done before in all my life.

PEG. Somethin' useful?

ALARIC. No, no. I'm goin' to ask a very charming young lady to marry me, eh?

PEG. What do ou think of that, now?

ALARIC. And—who—do—you—think—it—is?

PEG. I don't know.

ALARIC. Guess.

PEA. I couldn't guess who'd marry you, Alaric.

ALARIC. Who would it be?

PEG. That's the question, who would it be?

ALARIC. Who is it?

PEG. Who is it?

ALARIC. Who is it?

PEG. Who is it?

ALARIC. Who is it?

PEG. I'm asking you. You're not asking me. Who is it?

ALARIC. (*With all the fervor he can muster*) You.

PEG. Me? (*She falls back against the balustrade, then laughs long and unrestrainedly*)

ALARIC. (*Cheerfully*) Aha! Laughing! That's a splendid sign. Splendid! I always heard that girls cry when they're proposed to.

PEG. *I'm* half laughin' and half cryin'.

ALARIC. 'course ye know I've nothin' to offer you—

PEG. I know that.

ALARIC. —except a life-long devotion, a decent old name, and my career—

PEG. What?

ALARIC. —my career, when once I get it goin'. I only need a little incentive to make no end of a splash in the world. And *you'd* be my little incentive.

PEG. That's fine.

ALARIC. (*Runs upstairs again a few steps and then back*) Then it's all right?

PEG. That's the most wonderful thing I've ever heard in my life.

ALARIC. (*Runs upstairs again*) Good! Fine! Splendid!

PEG. Can't you make up your mind whether you want to be upstairs or downstairs.

ALARIC. Of course there are one or two little things to be settled first. (*Sits, top of stairs, facing front*)

PEG. Only one or two?

ALARIC. Just little things. (*Emboldened by her manner*) A little obedience.

PEG. You must obey me?

ALARIC. No, no. You must obey me.

PEG. That's funnier.

ALARIC. That's most essential. A little care about ordinary things, such as dress, speech, hair, etc., and—*no Michael*.

PEG. Oh! Couldn't I have Michael?

ALARIC. (*Firmly*) In that I'm absolutely determined. (*Rises*) No Michael.

PEG. You're very firm about it.

ALARIC. Very firm.

PEG. It wouldn't be, love me love my dog?

ALARIC. (*Prepared to compromise*) No. It would not. I've never seen a dog I loved less than Michael.

PEG. (*Pause. Rises and goes up level with him*) What could you offer me in place of Michael?

ALARIC. What could I offer you in place of—? Oh! There we have it, dear Cousin, *Myself*.

PEG. I'll keep my dog.

ALARIC. *Oh, come, I say! You don't mean that?*

PEG. I get more affection out of his bark of greetin' than I've ever got from any human bein' in this house. If it makes no difference to you I'd rather have Michael.

ALARIC. You don't mean to say you refuse me?

PEG. I refuse you.

ALARIL. You actually decline my hand and heart?

PEG. I decline your hand, and I wouldn't deprive you of what you've got left of a heart.

ALARI'. *(Unable to believe his ears)* Really?

PEG. *(On the brink of laughing)* Really!

ALARIC. Positively?

PEG. Positively!

ALARIC. *(Overjoyed. All the tension relieved)* I say! You're a brick! *(Shakes her hand violently)*

PEG. Am I?

ALARIC. It's really awfully good of you. Some girls in your position would have jumped at me. *(Comes down and back c.)* But you're a genuine, hall-marked, A-number-one little brick. I'm extremely obliged to you. *(Shakes her warmly by the hand over balustrade)* You're a plucky little girl, that's what you are. A plucky little girl. *(Goes towards alcove R.)*

PEG. Am I?

ALARIC. *(Comes back to her. She hands him book)* I'll never forget it. Never. If there's anything I can do—at any time—call on me. I'll be there—on the spot. *(Puts down book on nextel post, crosses R. behind table)* Bless you, Cousin! You've taken an awful load off my mind. I was really worried. Had to ask you—promised to.

PEG. Well, I said, "No." I refused to have you.

ALARIC. Yes. I know. I know. Ta, ta! See you before you go. Whew! What an escape!

(Hurries out through alcove R., into garden. PEG watches him go through window, and laughs)

PEG. But I said I wouldn't have you. (Door L. opens and HAWKES and MRS. CHICHESTER enter. HAWKES, L., looks around for PEG. PEG shakes hands with HAWKES) Hello, Mr. Hawkes! How do ye do?

HAWKES. Well, and how is our little protégée? I declare you're quite a young lady.

PEG. (Coming down-stage) Am I? Ask my aunt.

(HAWKES crosses over to c.)

MRS. CHICHESTER. Mr. Hawkes wishes to talk to you, dear.

PEG. And I'd like to talk to him.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Margaret! Why do you always have your hair over your eyes? Excuse me, Mr. Hawkes. (To door L.) Oh, it's hopeless. (Exit L.)

PEG. (Comes and sits on bench) I tell you, if I ever cut my hair off her occupation will be gone. I have to pin it up, and band it up. My father used to cut it every six months, and that's all the trouble we had with it.

HAWKES. What's all this nonsense about your going away?

PEG. I'm going back to my father.

HAWKES. Why are you going back to him?

PEG. I'm going back.

HAWKES. Aren't you happy here?

PEG. Devil a bit.

HAWKES. What's the trouble?

PEG. All the men have gone crazy in this house.

HAWKES. Has anyone been making love to you?

PEG. Yes. Two of them.

HAWKES. What?

PEG. One man tried to kiss me and I slapped his face——

HAWKES. Good.

PEG. The other man asked me to marry him and I sassed him.

HAWKES. Who was it?

PEG. Alaric.

HAWKES. What did you say to him?

PEG. I told him I'd rather have Michael.

HAWKES. Michael?

PEG. Yes. My dog.

HAWKES. (*Laughing*) Oh, the dog. So you refused him?

PEG. Of course. What would I be doing marrying Alaric?

HAWKES. Oh, I don't know. Is he too young?

PEG. Too young, too silly, and too selfish. And everything I don't like in a man Alaric is.

HAWKES. And what do you like in a man?

PEG. Precious little.

HAWKES. Listen, my dear Miss O'Connell. I'm speaking now as your late uncle's friend, and your well-wisher. You've a wonderful chance here. Remain with Mrs. Chichester. Continue your course of training. Then marry. Marry in England. And uphold the dignity and traditions of the Kingsnorths.

PEG. There's not a man in the world I'd marry now.

HAWKES. Really, Miss O'Connell, your future would then be absolutely assured. (*Taking her hand*) Come, now. Marry here.

PEG. Are you proposing to me?

HAWKES. (*Laughingly*) Well, I didn't mean to, but now you suggest it——

PEG. I suggest it?

HAWKES. You're alone in the world. I'm alone in the world.

PEG. (*Rises and goes to staircase*) And as far

as I'm concerned you'll stay alone in the world. I'm going to get out of this crazy house. You're all mad.

HAWKES. You're determined to go back to America?

PEG. Yes, I am. And I was going to ask you to buy me a passage on the steamer.

HAWKES. (*Comes to foot of stairs*) I'll see that a passage is reserved for you, and will escort you down to the steamer myself.

PEG. Thank you very much, Mr. Hawkes.

(*Mrs. CHICHESTER enters with JERRY.*)

Mrs. CHICHESTER. Margaret.

JERRY. (*Going to foot of stairs*) Peg.

PEG. (*Looking at JERRY*) I'm going back to my father in half-an-hour.

JERRY. In half-an-hour?

PEG. Yes. In thirty minutes. (*Exit L.*)

JERRY. (*Turning to HAWKES*) What does she mean, Hawkes, by going in thirty minutes?

HAWKES. She's returning to America. She appears absolutely discontented here. I've reasoned with her, but she seems determined to go. (*Goes a little R.*)

(*Enter ALARIC.*)

ALARIC. Hello, Jerry! (*ALARIC shakes hands with HAWKES. They talk*)

JERRY. Hello, Al! (*Turns to Mrs. CHICHESTER*) I was entirely to blame for last night's unfortunate business. It was my fault.

Mrs. CHICHESTER. I've tried to tell her I'd overlook it, but she insists on returning to America at once. (*Enter JARVIS, coming downstairs with dog and bundle. Mrs. CHICHESTER turns to JARVIS*) Where are you going with these?

JARVIS. To put them in a cab, ma'am. Miss O'Connell's orders.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Put those articles in a bag. Use one of my daughter's.

JARVIS. Miss O'Connell objects, ma'am. Says she'll take nothing away she didn't bring with her.

MRS. CHICHESTER. (*Crosses to armchair*) That will do.

(*ALARIC drops down R. to armchair. JARVIS exit L. ALARIC and JERRY look at each other.*)

ALARIC. Never mind, Mater. It can't be helped. We've done our best. I know I have—even offered to marry her if she'd stay.

HAWKES. So I believe.

JERRY. You offered to marry her?

ALARIC. Yes.

JERRY. What did she say?

HAWKES. (*Comes down R. c.*) Yes, what did she say?

ALARIC. (*Confusedly*) Oh! Er—er—what did she say? Oh, yes. The little beggar laughed in my face. Said she'd rather have Michael.

(*All laugh except MRS. CHICHESTER.*)

HAWKES. Now, Sir Gerald. My duties in regard to Miss O'Connell end to-day. Good-bye. (*Starting to door L.*)

JERRY. I think not, Hawkes.

HAWKES. (*Turning to JERRY*) I beg your pardon.

JERRY. I must be satisfied that the conditions of the late Mr. Kingsnorth's will are complied with, in the spirit as well as to the letter. Remember, I am the chief executor.

ALARIC. (*By high chair*) What! An executor! Oh, fancy that, Mater. Executor!

HAWKES. Exactly, and——

JERRY. He expressly stipulated that a year was to elapse before any definite conclusion was arrived at. So far only a month has gone by.

HAWKES. But she seems determined to return to her father.

ALARIC. I never saw anyone so determined.

JERRY. Have you told her the conditions of the will?

HAWKES. Why, no. Mr. Kingsnorth distinctly stated that she was not to know them.

JERRY. (*Behind chair L. of table*) Except under exceptional circumstances. Well, I consider the circumstances most exceptional, and I intend to make known the conditions to Miss O'Connell and then let her decide as to whether she wishes to abide by them or not.

HAWKES. (c.) As a lawyer I must strongly object to such a course.

ALARIC. I should say so, indeed. What on earth do you want to do a silly thing like that for, Jerry?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Absolutely unnecessary!

HAWKES. Entirely uncalled for!

ALARIC. Stupid. Deuced stupid!

JERRY. I don't think so, Alaric. In my opinion Margaret ought to be told.

ALARIC. Ought to be told! Tush and nonsense!

JERRY. (*Coming to c.*) I intend telling her why she was brought here, and what Mr. Kingsnorth wished should be done for her.

ALARIC. I never heard of such a thing.

MRS. CHICHESTER. It's absurd.

JERRY. Is it? Do you think you have treated her quite fairly?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Fairly?

JERRY. Yes. Fairly. Pardon me speaking in this way, but I am responsible to a certain extent for her being here. It was at my suggestion that your

late brother decided to give you the first opportunity of taking care of her. You have benefited by the arrangement, haven't you? Come! Think! What have you done for her in return?

MRS. CHICHESTER. What more could I have done?

ALARIC. Or I?

JERRY. Well, for one thing, you might at least have tried to make this a home for her. If you had, she would not be going away now.

MRS. CHICHESTER. How could I make it a home for such a girl as she is?

ALARIC. I should think not. Home, indeed!

JERRY. I suppose it was out of the question.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Absolutely.

ALARIC. I should say so.

JERRY. Very well. (*To HAWKES*) Then it is our duty to find some other lady who will carry out Mr. Kingsnorth's wishes. Under those circumstances she may be persuaded to remain in England.

MRS. CHICHESTER. What?

ALARIC. There goes our thousand-a-year, Mater.

(*Enter PEG and ETHEL coming downstairs.*)

ETHEL. Peg, don't go.

PEG. The cab's at the door. There's nothing to keep me here now. (*Crossing to MRS. CHICHESTER*) Good-bye, Mrs. Chichester. I'm sorry I've been so much trouble.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Good-bye, Margaret. (*Pointing to her dress*) But why this dress? Why not one of the dresses I gave you?

PEG. This is the way I left my father—this is the way I'm going back to him. Good-bye, Alaric.

ALARIC. Good-bye, you little devil.

(*They shake hands.*)

PEG. Good-bye, sir.

JERRY. (c.) One moment, please. Have you ever wondered at the real reason why you were brought to this house, and the extraordinary interest taken in you by relatives who, until a month ago had never bothered about even your existence?

PEG. Yes. I have wondered.

JERRY. (*Impatiently*) First of all I must introduce myself to you in a new capacity—as the executor of your late uncle's will. One of his keenest wishes was to atone in some way for his unkindness to your mother.

PEG. Nothing could do that. "Ye've made yer bed, lie in it," was what he wrote to my mother when she was starvin', and why? Because she loved my father. Well, I love my father, and if he thought his money could separate us he's very much mistaken. No man can separate us—no dead man.

JERRY. In justice to yourself you must know that he set aside the sum of one thousand pounds a year to be paid to the lady who would undertake your training.

(HAWKES *sits by desk.*)

PEG. A thousand pounds a year? (*To MRS. CHICHESTER*) You got paid for abusing me?

JERRY. (*By table*) No. For taking care of you. I tell you this because I don't want you to feel that you have been living on charity. You haven't.

PEG. (c.) I've been made to feel it. (*To MRS. CHICHESTER*) Who are ye, I'd like to know, to bring me up any better than my father? I want you to know that my father is just as much a gentleman as you are. He never hurt a girl's feelings just because she didn't have any money. I'd like to know if it's a crime not to have any money. (*Crosses over to ETHEL*)

ETHEL. (L. c.) Don't cry, dear. You have literally fed and housed us for the last month. The day you came here we were beggars.

PEG. (*Looks up at her in astonishment*) Ye were beggars?

ETHEL. Yes. We have nothing but the provision made for your training.

PEG. And will ye have nothing if I go away?

ETHEL. Nothing.

PEG. Is that what ye meant last night by the roof over ye? (ETHEL *checks her*) And I was drivin' ye to it. (ETHEL *drops her eyes*) Well, I wouldn't see ye a beggar for the world, Ethel. I've been raised one, and I know what it's like. Bring in my bundles and my dog. I've changed my mind. I'm going to stay here. (PEG *sits by table*. ETHEL *crosses behind table to R. c.*)

JERRY. (*Coming down*) That is just what I would have expected you to do, but there's no need for such a sacrifice. I came here this morning with some very good news for you, Mrs. Chichester. I happen to hold some shares in Gifford's Bank, and I am happy to say it will shortly reopen its doors.

ALARIC. (*Down to R. of MRS. CHICHESTER*) Reopen its doors! So it jolly-well ought to. What right had it to close 'em? That's what I want to know.

MRS. CHICHESTER. Oh, Ethel—Alaric.

ALARIC. (R.) Now, Mater, listen to me. Every ha'penny goes out of Gifford's Bank and into something that's got a bottom to it. In future I'll manage the business of this family.

PEG. (*Rises*) That settles that. You don't need me any more. Good-day to yez. (*Starts to go*. HAWKES *rises to open door for her*)

JERRY. (*Stopping her*) Just a moment. There is just one more condition of Mr. Kingsnorth's will, that you must know. Should you go through your

course of training satisfactorily to the age of twenty-one you will inherit the sum of five thousand a year.

PEG. I get five thousand pounds a year when I'm twenty-one? No wonder all the men were mad to marry me this morning. (*Looking at ALARIC*) I might forgive you, Alaric. (*Looking at HAWKES*) But I'd like to know what you meant, Mr. Hawkes.

HAWKES. (*By door, turning*) Oh, nonsense! Come, now, Miss O'Connell—

JERRY. Did you propose to Miss O'Connell, too? (*Turning to HAWKES*)

HAWKES. (*Hesitatingly*) Well—er—in a measure.

PEG. Yes. It was very measured.

HAWKES. It seemed to be an admirable solution of the difficulty.

PEG. He's a solution, he is.

HAWKES. Well, there's no harm done.

PEG. No. It didn't go through, did it?

HAWKES. No. Always your friend and well-wisher.

PEG. But never my husband.

HAWKES. Unfortunately, no. Good-day, everybody. I will wait to escort you to the boat, Miss O'Connell. (*Exit L.*)

JERRY. Now, may I have a few minutes alone with my ward?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Certainly.

PEG. Your what?

JERRY. Ward.

PEG. Who's that? Me?

JERRY. I am your legal guardian—appointed by Mr. Kingsnorth.

PEG. Shareholder in a bank, executor of an estate, and now you're my guardian. What do you do with your spare time?

JERRY. (*To the others*) Just a second, please.

(MRS. CHICHESTER *crosses to go upstairs. PEG stops her.*)

PEG. Aunt Monica, would you mind very much saying "Good-bye" to me?

MRS. CHICHESTER. Certainly not. Good-bye, Margaret. It is unlikely we'll meet again. I hope you have a safe journey. (*Exit upstairs. ALARIC crosses L. C.*)

(*Lights slowly down.*)

ALARIC. (*Lounging over to PEG*) Jolly decent of ye to offer to stay here—awfully decent. You are certainly a wonder. Miss you terribly.

PEG. Did you know about that five thousand, Alaric?

ALARIC. 'course I did. That was why I proposed. To save the roof.

PEG. Ye'd have sacrificed yerself by marryin' me?

ALARIC. Like a shot.

PEG. There's a great hero lost in you, Alaric.

ALARIC. (*Crosses to door L.*) Oh, I mustn't boast. It's all in the family.

PEG. Well I'm glad you didn't have to do it.

ALARIC. So am I.

PEG. Don't get sassy. (*Exit ALARIC. PEG looks at ETHEL. To JERRY*) Look out of the window a minute, please. (*Pointing to windows c.*) I want to speak to Ethel. (*JERRY goes to windows c. PEG crosses to ETHEL*) Is that all over?

ETHEL. Yes.

PEG. You're never going to see him again?

ETHEL. Never. I'll write him that. What must you think of me?

PEG. I thought of ye all last night. Ye seem like someone lookin' for happiness in the dark with yer

eyes shut. Open them wide, dear. Look at the sunlight and ye'll know happiness.

ETHEL. I feel to-day that I'll never know happiness.

PEG. I've felt like that ever since I've been in this house. I tell you, three meals a day, a soft bed to slape in, and everythin' ye want, makes ye mighty discontented, so it does.

ETHEL. Last night you saved me from myself, and then you shielded me from my family.

PEG. I'd do that for any poor girl—much less my own cousin.

ETHEL. (*Crosses to door. Turns to PEG*) Don't think too hardly of me.

PEG. I don't dear. Sure, it wasn't your fault. It was your mother's.

ETHEL. My mother's?

PEG. Yes. She doesn't understand children. You can't raise them in a hothouse. You've got to thrust them out into the cold wind and let them get used to it while they're young. I had the advantage of you all the time. It isn't every girl has the bringing up I had from my father. Good-bye, Ethel.

ETHEL. Good-bye, dear. (*Cries*)

PEG. Don't do that, dear. Don't cry. (*Suddenly takes ETHEL in her arms and kisses her*)

ETHEL. (*Goes to door, turns*) Good-bye, Peg.

PEG. Good-bye, Ethel. God bless you! (*ETHEL exit L.*) All right. The door is shut.

JERRY. (*Coming down and round table R. to C.*) Are you still determined to go.

PEG. I am.

JERRY. And you'll leave here without a regret?

PEG. (*Looks down*) I didn't say that, did I?

JERRY. We've been good friends, haven't we?

PEG. I thought we were, but friendship must be honest. Why didn't ye tell me ye had a title? How

could I know you were a gentleman? Sure, Jerry might mean anybody.

JERRY. Are we never to play like children again?

PEG. No. We're not equals.

JERRY. Would nothing make you stay?

PEG. Nothing. I'm aching for my home.

JERRY. Peg! (*Comes forward to her*)

PEG. Sir Gerald!

JERRY. (*Tenderly*) Peg, my dear——

PEG. Are you goin' to propose, too? (JERRY *straightens up, hurt, and crosses to R. C.*) What the devil made me say that? (*Pause*)

(*Enter JARVIS L.*)

JARVIS. Mr. Hawkes says if you're goin' to catch the train, Miss——

PEG. All right. I'll catch the train. (JARVIS *exit*) It's my Irish tongue, I suppose. (*Creeps quietly to door L., rattles knob to attract JERRY'S attention, then goes out of door*)

(*Lightning and thunder. JERRY stands still, passes the back of his hand across his eyes. Goes to window R., and looks towards the lane. It is now very much darker. Suddenly the pent-up storm breaks with redoubled fury. The rain comes in torrents. Lightning and thunder follow in quick succession. Door L. opens and PEG staggers in half-fainting, shuts the door quickly, and leans against the door, deathly white, and trembling with fear. JERRY turns, gives a cry, and hurries to her.*)

JERRY. Peg!

PEG. Shut it out! Shut the storm out! (JERRY *draws the blinds. Faintly*) I'm sorry for what I

said just now. You're not going to be cross with me about that, are you?

JERRY. (L.) I couldn't be cross with you, Peg. I love you. Be my wife.

PEG. Don't be mad if I ask ye, but have ye proposed to me now?

JERRY. I have. Be my wife.

PEG. Ye have a title, Jerry.

JERRY. Share it with me.

PEG. Ye'll be ashamed of me.

JERRY. I love you.

PEG. Do ye love me?

JERRY. I do.

PEG. I love you, too, I do.

JERRY. (*Starting toward her*) Peg, my dear—
(*Stops and hesitates*)

PEG. Go on. Go on. What's the matter?

(*Lightning.*)

JERRY. Why, Peg, what will your father say?

PEG. My father always said: "Sure, there's nothing half so sweet in life as love's young dream."
(*Loud crash of thunder. She hides her head on JERRY'S shoulder. Thunder and lightning till final curtain*)

The curtain falls

THE END OF THE COMEDY

PEG O' MY HEART

ACT I

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOT

- Large blue velvet pile carpet to cover stage.
 Landing and stair carpet of the same material.
 Small oblong oak table. *On this*—
 Bronzed brass jardiniere containing 4 ft. real
 palm.
 Various pieces of music.
 Large oak tapestry-seated high arm-chair.
 Oak-stained Baby Grand Piano. *On this*—
 Tapestry piano cover,
 Various sheets of music,
 One red book,
 Bronze figure of Cupid,
 Brass basket containing flowers,
 Bronze photo frame with photo,
 China bowl containing artificial fern,
 Gilt wooden standard lamp, with
 Cream flowered silk shade.
 Three bound books, "Reader", "History", and
 "Geography".
 Oak cane-seated duet piano stool.
 Brown-plush-seated oak arm-chair.
 Circular oak cane-topped table. *On this*—
 Bronzed brass jardiniere containing 4 ft. real
 palm.
 Circular oak pedestal. *On this*—
 Bronzed brass jardiniere containing two-
 handled bronze vase.
 Long tapestry squab seat to window.
 Tapestry valance and drapery. *On this*—
 Two tapestry cushions,
 Two blue plush cushions.

- Small circular oak pedestal. *On this*——
 4 ft. real palm.
 Piece of blue drapery.
- Small circular oak pedestal. *On this*——
 Small brass jardiniere containing 4 ft. real palm.
- Oblong oak-and-cane writing-table. *On this*——
 Leather-and-brass blotting-pad,
 Brass blotter,
 Brass almanac,
 Brass two-well inkstand,
 Pens and pencil,
 Wooden photo-frame and photo,
 Japanese cigarette-box and cigarettes,
 Brass ash-tray,
 Brass match-stand and matches,
 Notepaper and envelopes,
 Small bronze vase,
 Small standard lamp with green silk-and-beads
 shade,
 Small catalogue of ladies' dresses.
- Small oak tapestry-seated square stool.
 Blue wicker waste-paper basket.
- Oblong oak bench with cane top. *On this*——
 Tapestry squab seat for same.
- Large oblong oak table. *On this*——
 Four monthly magazines,
 One "Ladies' Field" (Periodical),
 Brass book-holder, containing twelve bound
 books,
 Large atlas,
 Brass ash-tray,
 Brass match-stand and matches,
 Japanese cigarette-box and cigarettes,
 Wicker work-basket and utensils.
- Large oak cane-seated arm-chair.
 Oak cane-seated tall chair. *On this*——
 Tapestry squab seat.
- Oak cane-seated tall chair. *On this*——

Tapestry squab seat.

Small oak cane-seated arm-chair. *On this*——

Tapestry cushion seat.

French-windows, shut.

Creeper on balustrade-piece.

On staircase——

Large brass jardiniere,

Tall standard lamp with

Large pink silk shade,

Large tapestry arm-chair.

On walls——

Five pairs of blue plush curtains,

Five oak box-headings for the same,

Poles, rings, etc., for the same,

Three gilt-framed large oil-paintings,

Two two-light brass brackets,

Four blue silk-and-bead shades for the same,

Old English hall-lamp,

Brass switch for same,

Wooden electric-bell push,

Brass-and-ebony switch for lights,

Pair of cream casement-cloth curtains (Half-drawn),

Cords, pole, rings, etc., for the same,

Twelve red-geranium plants outside window.

HAND PROPERTIES

Small silver salver for Jarvis.

Bank letter for Jarvis.

"Morning Post" for Ethel.

Gent's visiting card for Jarvis.

Small canvas bag for Peg.

Small common purse for Peg, *containing*

Gent's visiting card.

Small brown-paper parcel for Peg, *containing*——

Small hair-brush,

Small comb,

Small Catholic Prayer-book,
 Small dog's collar,
 Small rosary,
 Small old-fashioned photo in case.
 The dog, Michael.
 Small bundle legal documents for Mr. Hawkes,
 containing—
 Will, and blue foolscap, written.
 Leather card-case and cards for Mr. Hawkes.
 Cigarette-case and cigarettes for Alaric.
 Ivory cigarette-holder for Alaric.
 The dog, Fluffy, for Ethel.
 Large bunch of red and white roses for Jarvis.
 Door-slam effect off L.
 Lunch-gong effect off L.
 Thunder sheet.
 Drum and beater for thunder-roll.
 Rain barrel.

ELECTRIC LIGHT PLOT

No ceiling batten.
 Large circular amber in footlights full up.
 Reflector amber in footlights full up.
 Large amber in back batten $\frac{1}{2}$ up.
 Four large amber lengths on back cloth.
 One small amber length to staircase.
 One small amber length to window R.
At cue, Peg's exit,
 Reflector circuit in footlights down to $\frac{1}{4}$ up,
 Large circuit in back batten down to $\frac{1}{4}$ up,
 All lengths slowly out.
At cue, "My aunt is Mrs. Chichester",
 Reflector circuit in footlights slowly up to full,
 All lengths slowly up to full,
 Large circuit in back batten slowly up to full,
 Small circuit in back batten slowly up to full.
At cue, when Jerry pulls open curtains,

2nd large circuit amber in footlights full-up suddenly,
Lightning effect for storm as per cues in script.

LIME PLOT

- One arc on back-cloth P. S. No. 17, flood, frosted glass.
 One arc on back-cloth O. P. No. 17, flood, frosted glass.
 One arc on alcove-landing O. P. flies No. 17, focus, frosted glass.
 One arc through window R. on staircase No. 19, thin frost, focus.
 One arc through window R. on to door L. No. 19, thin frost, focus.
At cue, Peg's exit,
 All arcs slowly out.
At cue, "My aunt is Mrs. Chichester",
 All arcs slowly up again.
-

ACT II

SCENE I

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOT

Same as Act I, *with the following exceptions*—
 All curtains drawn,
 Bowl of rosebuds on table c.,
 Flowers changed in vases,
 Plush cushion on bench,
 French windows open.

HAND PROPERTIES

Lare bound book, "The Love Stories of the World", for Peg.
Dog-fight off L.,
Silver salver for Jarvis.
Written note for Jarvis.
Clock strike off L. (9).
Band stands ready for band under stage.

ELECTRIC LIGHT PLOT

Three circuits amber in footlights full up.
No. 3 batten brailed close to No. 4, and
Both circuits green full up.
Small amber length to staircase,
Standard lamp on staircase alight,
Piano lamp alight,
Writing-desk lamp alight,
Both brackets alight,
Hall lamp alight.

LIME PLOT

One arc on back-cloth P. S. No. 11, frost, flood.
One arc on back-cloth O. P. No. 11, frost, flood.
One arc on alcove-landing O. P., flies.

ACT II

SCENE II

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOT

Same as Scene I, with the curtains all open.
French windows shut.

HAND PROPERTIES

Small handbag for Ethel with jewel bag inside.
 Electric flash-torch for Alaric.
 Electric candle for Mrs. Chichester.
 Glass of water for Jerry.
 Smelling-salts bottle for Alaric.

ELECTRIC LIGHT PLOT

No lights on stage, *with the exception of*
 Three 50-candle-power reflector lamps in green
 in footlights R. C. alight.
At cue, When Alaric turns switch on,
 Three amber circuits in footlights full up,
 Both brackets full up,
 Piano lamp full up,
 Desk lamp full up.

LIME PLOT

Same as Scene I, *with the addition of,*
 One arc through window R. on staircase, No.
 II, frost, focus,
 One arc through window R. on door L., No.
 II, frost, focus.

ACT III

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOT

Same as previous scenes, *with the addition of,*
 Rose petals on table C. and on floor,
 French windows open,
 Bunch of wild flowers in vase on desk.

HAND PROPERTIES

"Morning Post" for Alaric.
 Peg's bag, parcel, and dog, for Jarvis.
 Thunder sheet.
 Drum for rolls.

ELECTRIC LIGHT PLOT

Three circuits amber in footlights full up.
 Two circuits amber in back batten full up.
 Four large lengths amber on back-cloth full up.
 Two small lengths amber on staircase and window
 full up.

Lightning effect as in Act I.

At cue, Mrs. Chichester's exit,

Reflector circuit in footlights slowly down to
 $\frac{1}{4}$ up,

Large circuit in footlights slowly out,

Small circuit in back batten slowly out,

Large circuit in back batten slowly down to
 $\frac{1}{4}$ up.

All lengths slowly out.

LIME PLOT

One arc on back-cloth P. S. No. 17, frost, flood.

One arc on back-cloth O. P. No. 17, frost, flood.

One arc on alcove-landing O P. flies No. 17, frost,
 focus.

One arc through window R. on to staircase No. 19,
 frost, focus.

One arc through window R. on to door L. No. 19,
 frost, focus.

At cue, Mrs. Chichester's exit,

All arcs slowly out.

DRESS PLOT

JERRY.

ACT I. Riding suit. Jacket, waistcoat, breeches, leggings.

ACT II. Scene I. Evening dress, full.

ACT II. Scene II. Overcoat, hat, muffler.

ACT III. Lounge suit. Jacket, waistcoat, trousers.

ALARIC.

ACT I. Golfing suit. Jacket, waistcoat, breeches, stockings, brown shoes.

ACT II. Scene I. Evening dress (Dinner jacket).

ACT II. Scene II. Dressing-gown, pyjamas, slippers.

ACT III. Tennis dress. Jacket, waistcoat, flannels, white shoes.

MR. HAWKES.

ACT I. Morning dress. Morning coat, black waistcoat, gray trousers.

ACT III. Morning dress. Morning coat (Act I), fancy waistcoat, gray trousers.

BRENT.

ACT I. Lounge suit. Dark gray jacket, waistcoat, trousers.

ACT II. Lounge suit. Dark gray jacket, waistcoat, trousers.

ACT II. Scene II. Motor overcoat, cap, gloves.

JARVIS.

ACT I. Butler's dress, (Morning). Dress coat, high waistcoat, gray trousers.

ACT II. Butler's dress, (Evening). Dress coat, low waistcoat, black trousers.

ACT II. Scene II. Flannel dressing-gown, slippers.

ACT III. Same as Act I.

PEG.

ACT I. Blue serge costume, hat, stockings, shoes.

ACT I. Blue silk dress, lace bottom.

ACT II. Full evening dress, cloak, cap, stockings, shoes

ACT III. Silk morning dress.

ETHEL.

ACT I. Morning dress, stockings, shoes.

ACT II. Scene I. Evening dress, stockings, shoes.

ACT II. Scene II. Going-away frock, tiger-skin cloak, velvet hat, stockings, shoes.

ACT III. Morning dress, stockings, shoes.

MRS. CHICHESTER.

ACT I. Morning dress, stockings, shoes.

ACT II. Scene I. Evening dress, stockings, shoes.

ACT II. Scene II. Dressing-wrapper, lace cap, stockings, shoes.

ACT III. Morning dress, stockings, shoes.

BENNETT.

ACT I. Maid's black dress, cap, apron.

ACT II. Maid's black dress, cap, apron.

DRESSES FOR LADY UNDERSTUDIES.

MUSIC

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